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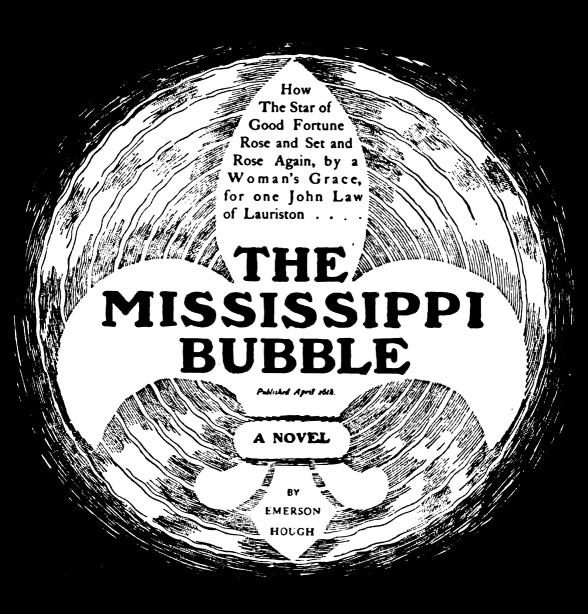
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How The Star of Good Fortune Rose and Set and Rose Again, by a Woman's Grace, for one John Law of Lauriston . .

THE

MISSISSIPPI

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A NOVEL

HOUGH

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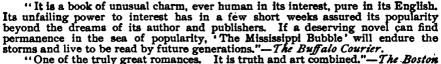












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G.L. Canner 15-27-59

T24-16798 FRIEND OF CARA'S

By Louise Betts Edwards

And their revenge is like the tiger's spring,
Deadly and quick and cruel; yet as real
Torture is theirs—what they inflict they
feel.

WISH you to say a good word for Cara, please." "I did not quite catch it," said the new editor. He did not rise for her, but swung around the other swivel-chair in the cubby-hole of a room at the head of the inhuman stairs, which was quite an attention from a younger man to an old lady. And he was such a busy younger man! Tall, well-built, with a hard, smooth face, he was in aspect almost like unto one of Bunyan's Shining Ones. Not merely his forehead, which showed a tendency to explore the back of his neck, but his small, anxiously intelligent features glittered with a sort of world's polish. His nose-glasses sparkled, a collection of diamond jewelry upon his person scintillated, his very clothing had the sheen of spickness and spanness which denotes newness. He was expensive, and he knew it, and he wondered if it were right to waste himself on this eager-eyed old lady of rapid speech and nervously fluttering hands, who repeated, still breathlessly, the remark with which she had burst in upon

"I wish you to say a good word for Cara."

"Are you quite comfortable?" solicitously asked the new editor, whose ground-glass door panel bore the legend: "Society and Drama." It was partly on account of his manners that he cost. "Take this fan. The steam heat makes the air oppressive." He wished he could tell from her clothes

whether she were rich or poor. He was one of the sort who care. But all old ladies dress so oddly! Her bonnet evidently had been, and perhaps still was, handsome, and that was fine lace around her throat, fastened with a big brooch. Her gown was forlorn and draggly about the hem, but that was caused by the rain.

"I should be delighted to oblige you," he said, kindly, "but I don't know a soul in the world by that name, ex-

cept Cara Melville."

"Well, she's the one," quickly. "She comes here next week—do you know it? But of course you do. It was on account of your being the person who would write about her that I wished to see you. I am a friend of hers—Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage," poking about for a card in a little black bag. "Being a stranger, the name of Armitage is, of course, unfamiliar to you," with some condescension.

But it was precisely there that she "There's an old bird was wrong. called Armitage," the managing editor, when inducting the new editor into his office, had said, with the simple reverence for age which is so striking a feature of our times; "you want to cultivate her. Never saw her beat for knowing all that goes on and telling all she knows. She's related to every Armitage in town and to half a dozen of the other best families, in a lot of devious genealogical ways. There is no one in real society whom Miss Armitage doesn't know and won't talk That's why the Eagle gets a lot of inside society news the other papers can't touch. Why she gives it,

I don't know, except that her family, it seems, have taken the paper for twenty years, and Hay, who came before you, knew how to approach her. I don't know, either, why her friends tell her so much of their private affairs when they know she can't keep a secret, but that is their business, not ours."

"Miss Armitage, I am so happy to meet you," said the Shining One, impressively, warmly grasping her hand, resolved not to be outdone by Hay, who came before him. He now saw that she was a woman one would know for a lady anywhere, that the bonnet was still elegant. The face in it had the ochre tint of sixty, but showed few wrinkles, and the brown eyes, rather too large and projecting, were unfaded and alert—the eyes of a cluband committee-woman, not a knitter by the hearthside.

"And as regards Cara Melville," he continued, "let us sit down and have a little talk." For she had half-risen to go, after stating her wishes. "Candidly, I had not intended giving Cara very much space, before I heard that she was a friend of yours." This, he felt, was "Posture 1: Diplomacy."

"Mightn't you call her Mrs. Melville?" asked the lady, quickly.

"Why, yes, I suppose I might—

though no one does."

"Thank you. You see, it is different with me, with whose niece Cara went to school. And why were you thinking of giving her so little notice? It

is fortunate that I stopped in."

"Well," and the Shining One's chair tipped back—not rudely, it did not get so far; but just far enough for him to clasp his slim bediamonded hands behind his gleaming head in an easy, effective posture, which he mentally labeled, "2: Calm Consideration." He spoke suavely, yet solemnly, as though the fate of a criminal hung on each judicial syllable, while the bright, protruding brown eyes of Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage rested scrutinizingly upon him.

"In the first place," he almost cooed, "do you think we ought to—ah—encourage her very much, on

moral grounds? Our paper has a large—ah—family circulation, in the very best homes, as no one knows better than yourself, my dear Miss Armitage. Of course Ca-Mrs. Melville is a friend of yours and a delightfully clever and entertaining person, and—ah—is doubtless, in one sense, all right, although, as you know, there is talk. But, in another sense, could you, from your heart, dear Miss Armitage—" he spoke now as though coaxing a child; it was a manner he had admired in magazine offices— "commend her course, or wish it to be held up as a model for the young girls of our country to follow? and young wives, and youthful mothers?"

"Certainly not." The lady of the four names leaned forward earnestly and bobbed her large ear-rings emphatically. "I think it is perfectly awful. I wrote her at the time a long letter of remonstrance, but I suppose she has been too busy to answer it yet, or else thinks I don't understand these troubles between husband and wife, which is true enough. For a long time I wouldn't believe it," with a movement of the excitable hands. After she wouldn't answer my letter, I came down myself to see Mr. Hayhe was the man before you; such a nice man! did you know him?—and asked him if it were true. We have taken the paper for twenty years, but it seemed such a serious thing to believe against Cara, and without her own corroboration, too. But, since she has done it and is now dependent on her own talents for support, she must live, and as I did not think the papers were treating her kindly of late, I thought I would speak to you."

"But, Miss Armitage, Ca—your friend has not been drawing such

good houses as she did."

"Just the reason—" Miss Armitage

began, eagerly.

But the Shining One had not finished. "These matters, Miss Armitage—"he was trying to fix the name in his memory—"are always of strict conscience with a dramatic critic. The last time I saw Cara Melville it struck

me that her vein of inventiveness had given out. No one can think of novelties forever. She never was handsome; now she is six years older than when she commenced, and there are younger and prettier imitators of her style. Then, too, her voice is going off. She never had any to go, in actuality, any more than she had looks. She just held herself together as long as she did by pure Cara-Melvillity, as you might say, for she never could do anything but act."

"Then all the more cause," said Miss Armitage, decidedly, "for us to stand by her, if her voice is going, and other people are unprincipled enough to imitate her. Of course, I have never seen Cara on the stage. I attend the theatre very little, and I have been told that these performances she gives are really no more

or less than vaudeville."

"Then," inquiringly, "you have not seen her since she left Mr. Melville."

"Oh, not for a longer time than that! I never really met Cara but once, and that was when my niece brought her home from boardingschool to stay at my house over a Saturday and Sunday. But I have her photograph taken at that time, and always retained an interest in her after she came out in society through what I read and heard. editors published so much about her, while she was only a slip of a girl, that I have sometimes blamed you for turning her head. Then, when that thing happened and she was thrown on her own resources, I felt I must stand by her, because those of us who don't understand these matrimonial troubles should not judge. I am contemplating giving a small dinner or reception for her at my house, just to show that the Armitages recognize her. No, please don't write that down," seeing his pencil dart toward a sheet of gray copy paper. might not be able to get the people to come, for there is a great deal of censoriousness concerning Cara."

"Well. I will try to oblige you,

Miss—" heavens, he had nearly said "Hermitage"! Farewell, then, to exclusive tips on society news! "I will give Mrs. Melville all the space and praise I think she is worth."

"Please give her a little more, can't you? I understand it is often done. And I feel so anxious for Cara's future! She was such a nice

girl at sixteen!"

Mr. Fanning's burnished countenance radiated a slight smile. "Josie," he said at the dinner-table that night, "there was a Dickensesque old lady came to see me in all this afternoon's pouring rain. She wants me to give Cara Melville more space than she is worth, because she is not so young as she was."

"Who? the old lady?"

"No; Cara. I wish you would listen intelligently. Also, stop using those straw mats under dishes. They are away out of date."

"Well, who's Cara? and who's Dick-

erson?"

"Great heavens, Josie, did you never read the papers even before I wrote for them? I know you haven't done it since. Dickens—oh, Dickens ran for vice-president in 1859. But Cara Melville was the woman who slapped her husband's face at a garden-party on their grounds, and then left him and her child, to go on the variety stage."

"He must have scolded her for using

straw mats," said Josie.

"Oh, no," said Mr. Fanning, grimly, not smiling now. "Cara was never that sort."

II

What sort was Cara Melville? had been a question somewhat fiercely debated half a dozen years before, when her name had been on the gossiping lips and in the startled ears of all that large section of society which enjoys gossiping and being startled. It had come up again at recurring periods thereafter, but more faintly, and now had hard work to hold its own as a

topic of interest, among so many other like questions concerning women who were very similar to Cara.

To be quite the same was not altogether possible. However unprincipled persons might imitate, Cara somehow managed to surpass them. It had begun when she was a gay little orphan of five, dashing across prohibited lawns belonging to uncles and cousins, on prohibited ponies, with her brief crape-trimmed skirts flapping smartly around her small red head. Cara was wont to be caught, but first she enjoyed a good gallop.

The pity usually accorded to a child left alone in the world somehow glanced off Cara Clay. It had an aspect of absurdity, applied to a girl who did exactly as she pleased in everything; who was spoiled by relays of relatives, near and remote, each in turn, who passed her from one to another, like a lending library, and seemed to find the same entertainment in her; a girl who succeeded almost sensationally in everything she undertook, including feats of varied mischief. In the school-room Cara headed her class, when she took time from other occupations, in which flirtations, ever suspected and never proved, played their full part. At the graduation exercises she was valedictorian, as a matter of course, and by electing to be amusing instead of sentimental, sent refreshed fathers and mothers, but, above all, brothers, into ecstasies.

In athletics it seemed scarcely worth while to compete with Cara, save that a foil for her triumphs must be had. And she took them, as she had delivered the valedictory, with such frank enjoyment, and won them so evidently by a mixture of luck and dash and indomitable industry mixed in with the cleverness, that it was difficult to resent the facts that she was golf champion of two Englishspeaking countries; that she, she alone, could participate in a century run and come in, the last woman to hold out, without looking horrid and disheveled like other last women.

maiden aunts, her own and other people's, who disapproved of girls entering on these execrable feats of endurance, said, "Oh, Cara Clay does everything, and can do it."

Cara could sail a boat; Cara could win prizes at polo matches—the girls urged her to marry soon, that she might have a house of her own to hold all the cups and ribbons and similar stuff she captured in these contests. In private theatricals she was dazzling, wonderful, especially in comedy parts, where the quality called by Mr. Fanning "Cara-Melvillity" bewitched audiences prejudiced against her acting by her preëminence in everything else.

It seemed odd to leave all this to go and live on a Colorado sheep-ranch with Will Melville. She could have done better than Will, but, "You always expect that sort of girl to marry the sort of man that you wouldn't expect her to marry," people said, lucidly, and gave her the very best wedding presents money could buy and the very best wishes heart could desire. The girls drew a rather relieved breath and knew that now there was more room for them, and the society papers ceased to use her pictures.

Will Melville was a quiet man, considerably older than Cara, with goldenbrown eyes and a golden-brown Vandyke beard. That was really all Cara's set knew of him, save that he belonged to a good family which had thoughtlessly omitted to amass great possessions; Will's were represented by the sheep-farm, on which he had spent his small patrimony before selecting Cara as a wife—no one would have done it after. The weddingcheque with which the wealthiest uncle washed his hands of Cara was expended on an addition to the farm's acres, of which Cara was as proud as of the home-made frocks of her girl-People thought she must be very much in love. The girls said her letters home were sickening.

Cara playing Andromache! and to an audience of one! It seemed ineffably comic, after so much Mary Stuart and

Nance Oldfield and Mrs. Pillicoddy. People who had accused her of a modicum of selfishness beneath her charm were brought to confusion by reports of Cara as the most notable of housewives, Cara as a sheep-farmer, even as a sheep-shearer and doctor, and a successful financier; for under her practical advice and energetic assistance Will's farm prospered and his flocks doubled.

By-and-bye the reports grew less comic. Two children died, and were buried under infant trees set out by their own small hands. Will had a long illness, through which Cara, all alone, nursed him, with her baby at her knee. But worldly gains increased until, at last, Will was able to sell his ranch at a handsome profit and with Cara and their one remaining child to return to the East, where he bought a share in a wool-broking business and Cara smilingly held out her hand for the reins of social leadership which she had relinquished.

Every one knows what a difficult thing this is to attempt. It is as though the stone which has sunk in the pond with a great splash should, after a century, lift its head and try to emerge through the old opening. Cara accomplished it, however, whether with ease or with difficulty no one ever knew. As the wife of a comparatively wealthy man and the mistress of a home of her own, she swayed social destinies more absolutely and brilliantly than she had ever done in her girl-The newspapers bestirred hood. themselves for a fresh set of photographs, though she seemed the old Cara, with little sign of the tarnishing years or the bitter bereavements that had passed over her chestnutcurled head—just as Will seemed the same Will, older than Cara, with the same golden-brown hair and Vandyke beard, and seldom evident socially. In one moment, however, he became the most-talked-of man in New York society. And that was when his wife, as Mr. Fanning had said, suddenly turned, while conversing with him at their own garden-party, and, in the

presence of thirty or forty assembled guests, struck him full in the face. Then she walked tranquilly down the garden-path, where the stunned spectators made way for her, ordered a small handbag packed quickly, and was out of the house before the red mark on her husband's cheek had faded to white, or the first uncomfortable visitor had sounded the signal for a general stampede. And with the house and her husband she left behind their little boy, six years old.

No expostulating uncle, no insistent emissary of the press, ever received a statement of her reasons for such action. Both were treated alike by the two concerned; to all questions Mr. and Mrs. Melville had, each of them, "nothing to say." The partial answer came when Cara went on the stage and had a first, second and third season of meteoric success. She was so invincibly clever! Getting the usual start of the public in finding that heavy parts suited her but indifferently, she left the legitimate drama and became—it is difficult to say what, except Cara Melville. But she kept audiences in transports. She twinkled like a planet, with new ideas in amusing; she wrote amusing playlets herself and acted them; she wore herself lean studying music, with the result that she hypnotized people into believing that she could sing; she even wrote the music of her songs, hitting on the expedient of composing them extempore, as fast as she could jot the notes down on a great blackboard, laughing quite as heartily at the grotesque harmonic combinations and false chords as any critic in her audience. Her very smile became the Then she starred the British Isles in a triumphal tour, and erelong hazy noblemen were connected with her in rumor, not as offering themselves in marriage, but as ready and anxious to do so if she were free. She queened it in bohemia as in the more conservative circles of her native city; but, though gossip perpetually buzzed about her name like a covetous bee, it never quite succeeded in rifling

her of that which we call "reputation," and yet her reputation was never unchallenged—this was impossible, in the set with which she went. The old Cara Melville receded more and more from public view, together with the paragraphs and contradictions of paragraphs in the newspapers, to the effect that "influential friends were again endeavoring to reconcile Cara Melville and her husband, the wellknown wool-broker;" or that "Mr.William Melville, husband of the famous variety actress and improvvisatrice, Cara Melville, was about to bring action for divorce on the ground of desertion."

Then something rather curious happened. The Cara of the present also began to recede from notice. Later sensations, younger and prettier rages, crowded her close. She worked indomitably, grew leaner, more inventive and resourceful, less and less successful. It seemed as though, having made her second great splash, the waters were meeting over her head.

"But you can't down Cara," said certain members of her set, whose fortunes were bound up in hers; "she'll think of something else."

III

Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage, related to every Armitage in the city directory, had never before been in a hotel where theatrical folk lodged. Her quick eyes revolved around the gilt-and-white parlor, like the bright brown globes of an orrery on their piv-It was wholly like other gilt-andwhite parlors. It was, in fact, rather more gorgeous and odoriferously new than was the Bellevue, where most of her out-of-town friends put up when they did not stay with her, who was rapaciously hospitable. There were very few other hotels whose threshold her trim, scudding little feet had ever crossed. She plucked up heart for Cara's prospects, if she were able to lodge in such splendid surroundings. She wished there were some way of telling whether all of the persons passing through the green-carpeted hall and making occasional incursions into the reception-room, where she sat on a strain of acute observation, were actors or not. She supposed not, since she had always heard that you could detect them at once. She had never seen a player off the stage.

Cara's maid entered the room with the excuses for which maids are employed. Mrs. Melville was resting before a rehearsal; Mrs. Melville was working very hard; she saw no one but reporters; would the lady excuse her?

The lady flew into an odd little rage, lasting about two seconds, during which her feet tapped the floor, her eves and both her diamonded hands flashed dramatically, and her head, with its iron-gray "front," so smoothly parted as to deceive the very elect, waggled furiously. "I have missed a committee meeting of the Daughters to come here. I intend to see Mrs. Melville." All this in stern staccato. "Did you give her my card? I thought Tell her at once, please, as my time is valuable, that, if she does not recognize my name, it is an old friend of hers."

Cara Melville threw off the silk quilt under which she was lying in her bedroom, and both her long thin arms were outstretched over her head. Should she change the kimono she wore for a Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage. whom she could see in the next room, her boudoir, through the parting of the rich portière, but who belonged nowhere in her heavily charged memory? "Armitage—Gouverneur Armitage," she repeated, scanning the card on her dressing-table, while she snatched up the dragging mass of chestnut hair, all curls and rings, and ran one pin through, which held them. As Mr. Fanning had said, she had never been pretty. She carried finely a figure that had lost too much of its roundness; the hair was good, though frequently criticized as too curly; the olive eyes were cold and unlighted, with the mist and weariness of lost sleep in them, and none of her other features would have been looked at twice, if attention to them had not always been compelled. She felt a little cross, and did not change the kimono to step through the doorway to meet an old lady with waxy, crinkleless cheeks distended in a delighted smile and dark eyes that threatened to lurch out of their sockets, as she seized both her friend's hands with her own. "My dear child! Cara! Oh, how naughty of you not to recall me! Nelly Nelson's aunt—don't you remember?"

"I remember every good time I ever had in my life," said Cara, "and that one with Nelly was at your house, wasn't it? and there were about a thousand nephews invited to meet us, and you made up a box-party for the very theatre I'm now leasing, and everything was jolly as the day was short. What a beast I was to forget! and what a dear you were—and are—to hunt me up in this horrid plush place!"

"I thought it nice," said Miss Armitage; "nearly as handsome and refined as the Bellevue, and the people—" She had nearly said, "do not

look theatrical."

"But, my dear girl—" Cara had always called every one that, except men—"it is ruining me!"

Miss Armitage's eyes jumped.

"Financially, I mean," explained the younger woman. "I have my own company this season, you know. I concluded it was rather dangerous to trust in one's unaided talents—and it takes more nerve and capital than you can think, Miss Helena! You see, now I am remembering everything, even that you prefer that name to Miss Armitage."

"From you, Cara," rather quickly. "I always liked and took such an interest in you. Are you—are not your—don't things prosper, Cara? You see, I do not wholly know the terms to use."

"Neither do I, Miss Helena—never having been taught swearing when I was young. And I should never do it before you, anyhow. Things are just about as bad as they can be—

audiences fiendish, critics insane. I say these things just to you, though you probably read in yesterday's Eagle that Mrs. Melville declared that her reception in American cities had never been so cordial as during this season, and laughed at the report that slender box-office receipts were about to force her company into insolvency.' Did you ever know me when I was insolvent? I don't suppose you see Sunday newspapers, else you would know that was a corking send-off Fanning gave me—nearly full-page 'appreciation,' with a three-column picture. I wonder what started him?"

"Do you know Mr. Fanning?"

asked Miss Armitage, hastily.

"Only since he called to interview me. We are old friends now, of course. He was gorgeous about my first night, too. I think I made an impression on him. I'm sure I tried to."

"Why, Cara!"

"I never had to try before, that is true. Don't looked so shocked, Miss Helena; I'm the most circumspect little Cara that ever was. I've invited his wife as well as himself to a little Welsh-rabbit affair up here, Sunday night. I've a notion the wife won't come, though, which is her mistake. Oh, dear! you disapprove of Sunday, don't you? But it's my only free night."

"Why, Cara, I never judge anybody, for I think we understand so few things in this world. That is what I always tell the Daughters when they wish me to oppose this one or that one in an election. As you say, it is your only night. Poor child! you must get

very tired."

The other looked up and smiled. Then she clasped the long arms at the back of her head, in an attitude Miss Armitage admired very much, though reluctantly, for it was a stage attitude. But it expressed a certain sense of languid power, of the restrained hand that but bided its time, to which the old lady's own valiant spirit kindled. Then Cara smiled again, more quizzically than before, and, unclasping the

hands, took a lace-mitted one in her own. "Did you ever know me when I was tired?" she asked. "Why, I shall have 'Resurgam' on my very tombstone. You women without livings to earn don't understand these matters. This is my work, the one thing I was born into the world to do—" she spoke with a sudden energy—"the thing I would die without; and the temporary aberrations of audiences or critics, or even myself, are nothing, except things to conquer. I love to conquer!" Her eyes shone suddenly; she sprang to her feet; her whole being, inert a moment before, glowed in energy like a lighted lamp. "Did you ever see me act, Miss Helena?" she asked, coaxingly. "Why not? It is the third time I have appeared in this city, and my appearances have not been brief."

"Why, Cara, you have only just come here, this season. And you know I am a very busy person, even if I do not earn my living. The time before that, I was in Europe. And the first time-"

She stopped in an embarrassment which her friend, still with that quizzical smile on her mobile face, made no effort to relieve. It was the inevitable moment of discomfort they had both been trying to ward off with talk. Miss Armitage smiled nervously and looked out of the east window. Mrs. Melville smiled tranquilly and looked out of the north one. Between them lay the shadow of a letter unanswered, an explanation withheld. Miss Armitage saw so vividly the scarlet burning cheek of a man, the sad, moist face of a lonely child, that she wondered how Cara, even in her rushed life, could put them entirely out of her memory. And if so, she could never put them out of other people's memory, which was very hard on Cara, if there was any good reason for the thing she had done. One must stand by her, at all events. She was the same generous girl as of old, when she would lend her Paris hats to Nelly and the other girls before she had worn them herself. Here she was offering Miss

Armitage a season box-ticket, which every one knows is very expensive.

"I will send it to you by mail, and never once ask whether you use it," Mrs. Melville said. "You transparent Miss Helena, don't I realize that you do not wish to see me act, because you know me? But I will not tease you, for I want to see you again before I leave—may I not? It is so jolly to meet an old friend who doesn't-" She paused abruptly.

But Miss Armitage had been waiting for this chance, and eager words

were ready.

"I knew it would be. I came to-day, Cara, with the intention of asking you to make my house your home during your two weeks here. I intended it. even before you spoke of the expense of this hotel and your—ah—financial anxieties. No, don't thank me; what is it beside a box-ticket, which really costs money? If I had any more means than just enough to live on, besides that house, I would——"

"You would lend your head along with the money, you dear thing, and I would rather have the head-it thinks of such kind things." The long arms were slipped about the older woman for a moment-no more; Cara had never been an affectionate girl. "I could no more accept your offer than I could adequately thank you for Dear Miss Helena, theatrical people must live at hotels, and, besides, the rest of the company is here. the house they would assuredly think I was going to disappear without paying them—I'm my own manager, you see. Oh, dear, you don't understand, do you, or forgive my ingratitude?"

"I don't presume to criticize, Cara; you know your own affairs, my dear child. I must go now, so as to catch the end of one committee meeting and the beginning of another; but if I can think of something more practicable

to do for you, I will do it."

"Get up a box-party for me," suggested Cara, mischievously. "Never mind. Good-bye. It's nice to meet an old friend who doesn't-

She stopped again; in her own

heart she knew that in the friend's heart the friend did.

IV

Many women earn their livings with more of leisure and self-sparing than Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage allowed herself in the pursuit of pleasure or duty, whichever she conceived it, among a maze of organiza-Chief of these was one to which she vaguely alluded as "The Daughters"—of whom or what, her family were the last to know or care, as clubwomen's families usually are. Arriving at the place of assemblage on this occasion, she found herself entirely too late. Vacant chairs, with a stolid janitor climbing up on them to close the windows, were all that confronted her. Not a Daughter was left to tell the tale. Miss Armitage sighed a little.

"If it is so late as this, there's no need to sit on those orphans at such a distance" she decided, quickly. "There will be a quorum without me, and they know, anyhow, that I am always in favor of admitting any one that applies. What's the difference between one Protestant orphan and another? Their parents are all equally dead. I will proceed to Athelstan's at once."

Mrs. Athelstan Armitage was the social head of the Armitages. Mrs. Don Armitage, her daughter-in-law, was a somewhat restive heiress-apparent to this honor. Between the two arose considerable friction, which Miss Armitage always considered it more delicate not to notice. She really loved peace too well to attempt the peace-maker. But as she could not go to Mrs. Athelstan's without passing under Mrs. Don's very windows, she stopped there first.

Mrs. Don was glad to see her. Servants, governesses and children had all been troublesome together, and a listener who never by any chance advised or criticized and was withal one of the family, before whom no reserve need be maintained, was a boon. But when it came Mrs. Don's own turn to listen, she shook her head.

"I'm really surprised at you, Aunt Helena," she said, in a monitory tone, being herself under no bond not to censure. "Of course, Cara Melville is very bright and dashing and all that, and was very much the vogue before we had Yvette Guilbert."

"You would scarcely expect a woman of Cara's stamp and standing to compete with——"

"I was not aware any one knew just what her stamp and standing were. As an actress, I consider her completely unobjectionable. I have laughed myself very nearly ill at her imitations and inventions, and I have recognized her, since it is recognition you wish, to the extent of eight tickets for a boxparty last night. But I will not attend any reception or dinner or anything of the sort, in her honor. woman who deserts husband and children in that callous, light way, without a word of warning to him or of explanation to the public"—the inflection of resentment sounded in the last clause especially—"injures all society as well as them." She looked triumphant, like one who has just hit on an original presentment of a great truth. "And to lower her dignity in that perfectly shocking and open manner, with a slap in the face, like a washerwoman married to a coal-heaver, was insulting not only him but all womanhood.'' She almost declaimed the last The thought flashed over the mind of her startled relative, how many potential actresses besides Cara society sheltered in its bosom!

"Suppose I slapped Don every time he was hateful?" continued Mrs. Don from the heights of moral sublimity. I feel like doing it many a time, I can tell you, his own aunt. I believe I have more to bear from him than Cara Melville ever had from Will Melville, who is a mild, gentle, old-cow sort of man, every one testifies; who let her follow her own bent in all things. Suppose I left him? Suppose every one deserted her children as soon as they became troublesome? I am sure the depravity of mine is only equaled by that of the governesses I engage to curb it. They take it from their father's family. I can say these things to you, Aunt Helena. If Cara Melville is as discouraged as you say, she had best see if her husband will take her back, unless he has at last

applied for that divorce."

A slow, pale red forced itself into the waxy cheeks of Miss Armitage, who felt as though something more soft and sacred than a man's face had been struck. In a year some married women will forget the delicate, impossible ideal of sex relations that some unmarried ones carry with them into heaven—which, we hear, has as little use for it as earth. "Oh, that would not be nice," she said, hurriedly-"would it? I don't particularly understand these things, of course. suppose there is very little use in going on to Athelstan's, if you all feel this

"To mamma's? I should say not. She is actually a fanatic on these points. If you do not sit with your children in your lap all the time, she says you are neglecting them for society. And yet the leadership of a great set devolves on me. That is why I could not possibly attend your reception, my dear. It would be com-

mitting all society to Cara."

"I see." said the aunt-in-law, humbly, and proceeded to the house of her brother, in a deeply dejected frame of mind. "Her arguments are unanswerable," she said to herself, sadly. "Yet it only shows how many are against Cara and how necessary it is to stand by her. And Isabel is so positive in her expressions and so opposed to the Daughters! I never understood tact, or generalship, or those things."

"Exhausted, I see," said her sisterin-law, sternly, when Miss Armitage arrived. Isabel was massive, graypompadoured, typical. People who did not wish to be swayed exasperated her. But she was good to the poor. "You will, doubtless, continue to drag about town from committee-meeting to committee-meeting, on foot or in horrid cars, no matter how many times I tell you our carriage is at your disposal. And it is only for those foolish Daughters and unwomanly streetcleaning agitations, after all; instead of the destitute poor who really require attention. If you must exhaust yourself, why not in a good cause?"

"Because bad ones appeal to me more, I suppose," answered the unswayable, with a forlorn smile. "I am not tired. No, don't ring for any lunch; I am not hungry. I am only

discouraged."

"Over Daughters?" grimly.

"Over daughters-in-law. I thought Don's wife would help me, being herself young, and fond of society and

pleasure.'

"She is fond of very little else," said Don's mother, still more grimly; "least of all, of helping people. I have tried in vain to interest her in charity What did she refuse you?" visits.

"Why, Isabel, I-am thinking of giving a little reception at my house, and she would not attend—a reception to Cara Melville," she added, des-

perately; "she is acting here."

"To Cara Melville! Oh!" Mrs. Armitage's silence could have been felt through every wall and partition of her house, down to the very kitchen, where the maids felt as though some one were walking on their graves.

"I understand," said her sister-inlaw, sadly. "Of course you are not a friend of Cara's, as I am, and you agree with Blanche, just as she said you Blanche really talked very would. well."

"Talk is not everything," remarked Mrs. Athelstan. "What did she say? I wish to know with what I am sup-

posed to agree."

"Oh, things unanswerable. Cara! That it was wrong to strike one's husband, for instance, even if he were as trying as Don, whom she often felt like slapping."
"So, she said that," noted Don's

mother, with thinning lips.

else?"

"That it was wrong also to forsake one's children."

"She should know. Her own have very little mothering, I am sure.

strikes me as unfitting for her to throw stones at a woman for doing by wholes what she does by halves. I never heard that Cara Melville left her little ones to governesses while she was with them, at all events. And Blanche's children are so charming—the very copies of Don."

"Yes, she spoke of that, and said that was what made them so trouble-

some."

"Troublesome!" repeated their grandmother; and again her silence was eloquent. "Has—has this young woman, of whose career I have not kept a close watch, lived an exemplary life since leaving her home in that singular way?" she demanded. "Are the plays she presents unobjectionable?"

"I do not know," answered Cara's friend, simply. "I have never seen her act, or met her, till to-day, since she was sixteen." She rehearsed her reasons for desiring to accord Cara "recognition," while her brother's wife listened with knitted brows. "Of course I can appreciate Blanche's position," she finished. "She said a great social system revolved around her and that to appear on such an occasion would be to commit all society to Cara."

"You over-appreciate it, I think," remarked Mrs. Armitage, senior, coldly. It sounded strange to her sister-inlaw to hear her speak thus of any one but the Daughters. Her attitude was rigid and two red dents burned in her cheeks. "Blanche Armitage may believe she leads society, but I am not vet superannuated or superfluous. indifference to husband and home and children were the sole requisites, she would doubtless far outdistance me. But, thank heaven! the domestic virtues are not yet wholly discredited. If I choose to appear at your reception, it may affect your friend's future very little; but it will affect it even less if Blanche stays away. She may well stay away!" It was the fire of a long-smouldering animosity that was lighting her cheeks. "She might be suspected of too close a sympathy for

Clara—Ara—what is her name? Of course, I can speak in this way to you, Helena."

Pure, thankful bewilderment unsteadied the footsteps of Miss Armitage as she hurried, obstinately carriageless, from the house, before Isabel should have changed her mind. The Domestic Virtues had promised to grace her little gathering and even to persuade some other socially weighty personages to throw themselves into the balance. She must write a note immediately to Mr. Fanning. She had not liked the man, but it was evident he could be useful to Cara. No: first she must tell Cara herself. And. unable to contain her exultation, impatient as a child, she altered her intention and her direction, and rushed back to the theatrical people's plush place to tell Cara.

V

CARA heard her through in a scrutinizing silence. Then she spoke, and it was Miss Armitage's turn to listen, with the mitted hands folded, unusually quiet, and with the buoyancy ebbing from her face perceptibly, as the blood from a wound. When the other had concluded, Miss Armitage rose. "You must, of course, do as you think best, Cara," she said, suddenly tired, as beseemed a woman of years who had been running about all day without any luncheon. "I thought only of your good." One could see that when she reached home she would cry.

Two sinewy hands suddenly shot out from behind Cara's back, where they had been clasped, and seized Miss Armitage's shoulders, with a grip gained from tacking sails and reining in refractory ponies and holding struggling sheep to the shears. "Don't dare to go away angry," she commanded; "no matter whether I deserve it or not. I know you thought only of my good. But it would not be for my good to be bored to death."

"But why should my friends bore

you?" asked the spinster, eagerly.

"Our best people!"

"Miss Helena, I'm done with best people, except those I find in bohemia's fringe. I have lived there so long, where we have best and worst and all the between-kinds, that I would feel stifled among those who are all of one kind. Variety is what I crave, Miss Helena!" And again the lights in her fagged green eyes leaped up and she smiled at the word as we smile at the names of those we love.

But Miss Armitage did not smile. She ran her eyes up and down the gaunt figure of the girl—for girl the younger woman always is to the elder—and the plain, animated face, with its coaxing, twisted lips, and felt in her startled heart the hostile grip of fact on faith. The faces of the forsaken man and child she had never seen pushed themselves insistently upon her vision. She would not judge Cara, but—Isabel might, and might even judge truly!

Cara read in her face some of Isabel's thoughts, vicariously mirrored. "You are quite right," she said, speaking with "I am wholly the greatest slowness. right. Yet in one thing I go deep enough, Miss Helena," and there was a sudden overflow of passion in her voice, sharply shut off, like the loud pedal inadvertently touched at the piano, "I feel a hurt to that same light vanity, or whatever it may be, that I keep where I suppose I should keep my heart, and I will not bare it for blows. Did you ever know me when I was snubbed? I will come under best people's roofs, even the very best," smiling at her friend. "No. I will not be stared at by them—save on the stage, where they pay for the privilege—or received, or rejected, or whatever their moment's whim may direct them to do, and to undo the moment after. There are not very many proud women in the world, Miss Helena, or there would be no world; but I am one of the few."

Miss Armitage sighed. "I suppose you must be what you think it best to be, Cara."

"Listen," said Cara, eagerly; "I have just thought of something, and you positively must not refuse, or I shall know that you think me horrid and my friends, too. I cannot come to your party. But you must come to mine. Ah, yes, Miss Helena! I will change the night from Sunday to Monday to suit you. That means it will be later, but Fanning, or somebody, shall see you safely home. You know Fanning."

"But I do not like him," put in

Miss Armitage, promptly.

"Oh, he is all right. He drops that manner after a while."

"So I suspected," said the first

speaker.

"But you will like the others. Rose Riter is a dear little thing. belongs in the company. She can't act, but she has pretty, taking ways, and she has had trouble with her husband and been driven to leave him, so I took her in just to give her a chance. There's Howell Grannis, too —he's not an actor, but an Englishman of a very aristocratic family, charming and cultivated. But, wherever this company goes, there Howell Grannis follows, or perhaps gets there before us. Isn't it ridiculous? He is as deeply in love with me as I will let him be."

"Oh!" said her listener, involun-

tarily.

"I said, as deeply as I would let him be. Then, there's Teddy Ward—the funniest thing you ever saw, especially when dancing on a table. Don't look so shocked, my dear girl. He always pays for the dishes. And what is the difference between a table and a floor,

morally speaking?"

"None, I suppose," acknowledged Miss Helena, humbly. "But, Cara, I hope you won't think it is in a spirit of reprisal, but—I would not meet your friends for all the world! I never mixed with such people in my life! I have no doubt they are wholly respectable, but it is in such a strange way—falling as deeply in love with married women as they are allowed to do and having trouble with their hus-

bands and leaving them—" it was her own cheek, not Cara's, that reddened—"and dancing on tables. I do not judge them, dear, but I am not used to it!" Hands and eyes flew about in distracted punctuation of her remarks. "At my age I could not begin to become used to it. Make my very respectful excuses to your friends, Cara—no, there is no use in coaxing me—and I—will go home, I think, and after luncheon make your excuses to Isabel."

VI

A house of her own—its privacy, its independence, its very lonelinesshad been the heart's dream of Helena Armitage since girlhood and its joy since mature womanhood, when the father, dying, had left to her, as the only unmarried member of his numerous family, the old-fashioned house in which they had all been born. every large brood you will find at least one like her, whom the clatter and the crowding, the crossing of interests, the very life and laughter, of the rest, fret into a consuming desire for a place of peace of her very own. Once installed in it, she reveled in hospitality. guest-chamber experienced changes of occupants, but few breathing spells. A convention of Daughters in the city—which meant visiting delegates to be entertained—the flying trip of an out-of-town friend, an overflow in the houses of her equally hospitable brothers or sisters—all these gave gladness to the soul of Miss Armitage.

And, too, to come home after a trying Sunday, beginning with the Chinese school, which she had conducted for thirty years, and pivoting on a dinner at Brother Athelstan's, set between two long church services—it was restful to come back to a house absolutely uninhabited save by one's self and one's servants. To eat a solitary supper and then read a solitary book, strictly suitable to the day, by a solitary fireside, or, perhaps, write a letter or two, in blank peace, and then slip down in one's wrapper for a bed-

time lunch set out by Maria, the waitress, before she retired—this also had its satisfaction in another way.

It was a late lunch to-night, for Miss Armitage had written more letters than usual. As she took her seat at the table, a funny little dignified figure, in her plainly made woolly wrapper of pink-and-white stripe, a glance at the big Chippendale clock showed her that it was close upon one o'clock. In returning, the glance rested at the end of the table. For there, clear to the inner senses, she saw the plain, wistful face, wonderfully winning in spite of the weary green eyes and the big bleak features, of Cara, whom she had judged. Against the principle and practice of a lifetime, she had taken upon herself to weigh a friend in the balance and, still worse, to find her wanting.

The face had bothered her in the same way when she had sat down to sup, hours before. And, oddly enough, at that very moment Rose Riter had laid her hand on an empty arm-chair in a dining-room at the Hotel Royal. "Who sits here, Cara?" she had asked.

"A lady who couldn't come," her hostess answered.

"Mrs. Fanning?" whispered Rose, mischievously. For Mrs. Fanning had been prevented from attending by a headache, her husband had explained, with his last exhibition of The Manner.

Cara had shaken her head. The spell of two observant, bird-like black eyes, half out of an earnestly bobbing head with jade ear-rings bobbing with it, was upon her. Mr. Fanning's glittering face could not outshine them; the huge bunch of Neil roses in the centre of the table, sent by Howell Grannis, could not conceal them; Rose Riter's over-loud laughter, harmless and soulless as a little kitten's shrill mew, and Teddy Ward's funniest turns could not drown a sober, surprised voice, saying:

"It is such a strange way of being respectable!"

Well, Miss Armitage was right. It was a strange way—a fevered, electric-lighted, noisy, trap-door way, with—oh, God, what toil to attain it at all, and to hold it when attained! And in every one's record a "but." Fanning was a clever writer, but—Mrs. Fanning had had a headache and could not come. Teddy Ward's was a heart brave but battered. Rose Riter's one true but tawdry, and Howell Grannis was a gentleman but a loafer, and Cara Melville—the old question! What sort was Cara Melville? You shall learn, Miss Helena! In amazing suddenness the longstifled human longing for sympathy, outpouring exculpation, rose up and shrieked in Cara. It was too much, to be misunderstood by a whole world! One fellow-woman should know why she walked in this strange way!

After she left the table she pulled Rose Riter to one side. "I'm going to disappear," she said, shortly. "They can make the same noise without me. I believe I hate Teddy Ward. You explain that I was ill, if they miss me. And send Fanning out to me in the reception-room, when you get a chance. I want him to take me somewhere."

Miss Armitage jumped from her seat at the first peal of the doorbell, holding aside her pink-and-white striped draperies with one hand and with the other the dining-room portière. Her eyes projected farther into space than ever. No, it was not a mistake, for, even had her ears deceived her, she could see the alarm run along the moving wire at the second loud, strong pull.

She was not timid, but Jacob, the butler, was. Moreover, he slept in the back of the house and would never hear the bell. Unhesitatingly she scudded across the hall in her loose straw slippers and, with much rattling of chains, opened the door. "What is wanted?" she asked, composedly. "Cara! Has anything happened? Come in, quickly, dear child! Is any one with you?"

"Fanning was," replied Cara, unwrapping her very beautiful cloak; "I sent him away when I saw the light. What luck, to find you up!" She laid her arm on the old lady's shoulder for an instant, which was a great demonstration for Cara.

"And how fortunate it is that I have food all ready on the table!" chattered Miss Armitage, leading her visitor into the dining-room. She was one reared in the ancient theory that

a guest was always hungry.

'How pretty your table looks!" said Cara. "So homelike! I had forgotten how a family table looks. How do you keep your biscuits so crisp, Miss Helena? And such nice, sharp cheese! It is a regular schoolgirly, picnicky lunch! Yes, I will have some cold meat, thank you. believe I am really hungry, though I have been sitting at a dinner-table half the evening." Yet, Miss Armitage saw very well that she merely broke up the biscuit, wasted the cheese and "fiddled," as that lady called it, with the meat, all the time excusing herself for eating so much. "I worked so hard all the afternoon, studying on "I am a new part," Cara went on. thinking of going back to the 'legit,' after all—legitimate drama, that means. Then you will come to see me act, will you not? This is a dog's life, and a circus dog's at that, making a fool of one's self to amuse other fools. The variety stage is like a lined crazyquilt—you get all one deadly color on the side turned toward yourself."

"Yes, of course you do," said Miss Armitage, courteously but uncom-

prehendingly.

"Fanning is going to write me a play," continued Cara. "He is really awfully nice, even though you don't like him. Clever, too. Feels a little too sorry for himself, however. He married his landlady's daughter at a time when he had no expectation of becoming a society editor. Life would be endurable if it were not for its marriages, would it not, Miss Helena?"

"My dear, how should I know? I

never was married."

Cara looked at her and laughed, a laugh more affectionate than a kiss—

from her. She pushed back her plate and chair. "You would know me a thousand years and not ask me why I did it, wouldn't you?" she said. "You dear little Lady Helena!"

"Why, Cara, I felt that if you had cared to talk about it, you would have done so long ago, to people of more importance than myself."

"There are none," said Cara, impetuously. "I left all my friends at my own table to-night, to come over to tell you such a joke!"

to tell you such a joke!"
"A joke, dear?" doubtfully. Miss
Armitage had but slight confidence in
her own sense of humor.

"Yes, really; such a grim one, Miss Helena! All this pother and publicity and excitement and impertinent questioning, all this pity for Will Melville and cautious arm's-length attitude toward me, as though there were some awful mystery surrounding our parting! It's the most ordinary episode of life. Only, as a general thing the wife hasn't the spirit to leave, or the talent to earn her own living. If only Abélard and Héloise had happened to be commonplacely married, how the romance, if not the tragedy, would have vanished from the situation forever! People are so stupid! Don't they know men tire of women? They should, since one-half of them are men and the other half women!" laughed, not so sweetly as before.

"But I understand less than ever," said Miss Helena, confusedly. "I had thought you were so happy together. Those letters you wrote Nelly from the ranch, telling how you did the housework together, how devoted and considerate he was, were they——?"

"No; as it happened, they were not lies. I suppose I would have written so in any case, for people have not very often known it when I was downed, or disappointed, or slighted. Having no parents to blubber to is a training, Miss Helena! I early learned to put on my smile as I did my shoes and stockings, whether I wished to or not. But Will was all right those first years—indeed, I suppose he never was anything he could help being. It was my

mistake in marrying him. Don't ever marry a man older than yourself, Miss Helena!"

"My dear, I scarcely could."

"He was older," continued Cara, unemotionally, "and he was quietat least I called it by that name. Never marry a quiet man, Miss Helena! So he attracted me, because I was young and-not quiet. He seemed a great, strong bulwark to rest against. And, at last, I felt cold—I looked up and found it was because he had turned to stone. Does it not seem strange, Miss Helena, that the same God should have made two creatures so different as man and woman? I had been a good wife to Will Melville," sudden fury flashing in her voice, "I had borne and buried his children, I had left all I ever loved or knew for him, I had shared every grief and tried to augment every joy that came into his life—his wretched, cold, self-contained life, into which I poured all my own, as into a mould. Whatever I finally come to, now that I do not care, I have those eight years to my I honored him, even obeyed credit. him, though that doesn't sound very credible; cherished him in sickness and in health, because I—wished to make a success of marriage as I had of everything else—everything else!" striking her fist on her palm as men

"It was a high sense of duty," commented Miss Armitage, admiringly, "and should have had its reward. And without loving him, too!"

Cara turned her face away. "I loved him all right," she said, in a moment. "That had its reward. He wearied of me, and before I wearied of him! I can never forget," with an angry, crumpling clutch at the table-cloth, which she twisted into cords as she spoke, "that there, where I cared most, I was beaten, outraced—I, Cara Melville! There should be schools, Miss Helena, where women can be taught to tire of men gracefully and in plenty of time, since it seems to be beyond hope that men should not tire of them." She threw the cloth from

her. "I hurried the sale of the ranch," she said, "because I thought the trouble came from our being shut up together too much. And then two of the children had died."

"And he did not care about that, either, I suppose?" sympathetically.

"No-o; he was rather good then." Cara once more turned her face away. "One can't always be having deaths to soften and humanize them," she said, shortly, when she turned back. "Oh, no woman's-rights champion could be more bitter against men and against marriage than I. That the whole thing is a hideous failure is beyond doubt. If I had not my living to earn, or took any interest in public questions, I should probably be on the platform instead of on the stage, agitating—something or other. Perhaps if another theatrical season fails, I may publish my unhappy matrimonial experiences in a book and make something out of them."

"Cara!"

"Oh, Miss Helena, I don't care very much about anything any more, except success and a good time and a few things like that. But let me tell you about the New York years and get through with it. We had so counted on the time when we could sell the ranch and come back here to live in comfort; and it was such a ghastly mockery! Some of my kind friends have blamed me, I hear, for throwing myself into the social whirl where my husband did not follow me. Why should I not throw myself into the life that I loved, for which I had been starving for eight lonely, hardworking years? And why should he not follow me? I had followed him into his life, as far as Colorado, and one's fellow-creatures are not poisonous to mix with. He sat and sulked at the head of my table when I gave dinners, and slipped away as soon as he could, and everywhere I went I was the woman without a husband. He left me in spirit—a sly, cold, hypocritical desertion—long before I left him openly, relieving him of the necessity to talk to me and giving him the

opportunity to find some one who did interest him. He cared as little for one woman as for another; though," contemptuously, "I wish he had cared more! I could have won the gamethough I was never pretty. I would at least have shown some signs of life. Life is what I crave!" clasping her strong, lean, nervous hands excitedly. "Against all my nature I curbed myself for eight years and was the most patient of drudges for him. Miss Helena, can you imagine me churning butter and scouring floors and stitching overalls? Yet," wistfully, "those were the happiest years of my life."

"So, they were easy to live, after all!" said Miss Armitage, thoughtfully.

Cara flushed a little. "I was good all the while, too," she said, sharply. "I never gave that man a cross or hateful word, until I—slapped him."

"And he gave you many, I suppose,

poor girl!" compassionately.

"I thought I had made it clear that he gave me no words at all. He once let two weeks pass by without kissing me, and did not know it—if he had only known it! If it had only been that he was angry, or wanted something, or was thinking of something! I don't know what he wanted or was thinking of. I fancy he was vaguely miserable. Selfish people usually are, don't you believe?"

"Yes, indeed. Pity you could not have helped him out of it in some way,

just as a friend might."

"Two selfish natures are better parted, Miss Helena. I saw that, as I saw a great many things, and I was determined to act differently from most women. I looked ahead of me, still alive and young, and saw those last gray years of the neglected wife; and I would not stand it—no, I would not!" The anger leaped higher in her "Do you know what most unhappily married women do? They meekly wipe furtive tears from their pale cheeks and clasp their children his children—closer to their hearts; or they clasp some one else closer to their hearts, which I never did; or they take to clothes as men take to drink.

I'm not of a sobbing or embracing nature. But I feel things; and I could not take to clothes more than I have

always done."

She flashed a smile full of mischief and Cara-Melvillity on her hostess. "I will own I was hasty in my way of doing the thing," she said. "I thought it easier to get along in the world than it is, and I did not realize the difference between amateur and professional theatrical success. But I've got along, and enjoyed myself. My only mistake was in not making my financial preparations more prudently. But one day—that day—I struck him. You know that."

"Yes, dear. I wish you had seen

your way clear not to do it."

"I saw nothing clearly, Miss Helena. Do you know, I had never felt actual rage before in my life? It came suddenly, like a red cloud or a wave of blood, and I was part of it. We had a lawn-party, you know. They had been teasing me to recite for them, and I thought it might not be dignified in my own house, and—I thought, too, that Will might not like it. He did not seem to like anything. I asked him, and he replied that he did not care. It was so true that I slapped him. It surprised him, I think, for he had never seen me angry before. I told you I had been a good wife. I hurt a few inches of fatty tissue, I suppose; he beaten my heart into insensibility. out of sight. Oh, how—how I hate that man! Why," consistently, "did you bring this subject up?"

"I don't know what I was thinking of," apologized Miss Armitage. "He seems certainly to have been a most unsuitable companion for you, Cara, who are so fond of gaiety, so accustomed to praise and petting. The stage must have been a great resource to you in your troubles. But—Cara, wasn't there a little boy? You have not mentioned him. Perhaps there is some mistake—"her voice died of its own shyness. It seemed so impertinent even to think of things so outside her province and that of the Daughters.

"Oh, yes," said Cara, curtly; "there was Billy, all right." She did not turn away her head here, as Miss Armitage involuntarily expected her to do. "That was inexcusable," she said, coolly. "But I had not time to think or plan much, and I should not have been allowed to keep him, had I taken him, and—""

"You could not stay, I suppose?"

"I could not stay. Had he been a little girl, it might have been different. But he was the living image of Will Melville and, indeed, seemed part of him more than part of me, and I—somehow felt he would grow into another man, to make another woman wretched, and I could not touch him, did not want him—I never pretended to be crazy over children, anyhow. Old Mrs. Melville, I understand, is bringing him up very well."

"Yes. It was a pity."

"Oh, no, it was not," quickly. "If a woman can leave her child, he is better off without such a mother. Did you never go to a mothers' congress? They all understand about such things. And don't you ever—ever go to bed in this house? You never had such a tired Cara in it!"

Full of compunction, Miss Armitage led the way to the guest-chamber. "Always ready, Cara," she said, proudly. "We will not talk a moment longer. Pleasant dreams, my child! Let me light your candle."

A bedroom candle! Cara had borne such across the stage, but in her own room she was used to faint gas or dazzling electricity, according to hotels. There seemed something quaint, picturesque, productive in itself of pleasant dreams, in the stiff silver thing, with an actual wax candle in it, which she raised over her head when Miss Armitage had left, to survey the room in sections of light. Chippendale furniture, of course; a silksquare quilt on the bed, whose sheets would surely be lavender-scented. How it all accorded with the candle! Decorated ceiling and walls-

"Good heavens!" she said, suddenly,

and set down the candle.

From the soft gloom of the shadows on the wall beside the bed there gleamed out at her, unsubdued, two of the most awful eyes she had ever seen. One hears of eyes that guard a secret. How much more terrible are eyes that demand a secret! and not one only, but, with a simple, overwhelming completeness of confidence, all the secrets, dark or bright, that the withered, cunning world hides from youth. In a word, they were the eyes of a girl of fifteen.

Cara laughed, not lightly. She picked up the candle to cross the room to the picture. Something dragged on her shoulders—as though to hold her back. It was her green satin cloak, the work of her own clever fingers. With an impatient movement of her body she shook it down on the floor, where it lay out-

stretched like a glowing rug.

She studied curiously the young figure in the carefully framed photograph. "Heavens!" she murmured again; "did I ever look like that? I had completely forgotten the old thing." She tried to laugh at the prim, parted hair, the ridiculous sleeves, the pensive attitude over the pasteboard photographic balcony with its stiff drapery. It was no use. We Why deny it? There love ourselves. are times when the love amounts almost to worship, and when one looks back over the destructive years and sees a young, innocent, awesome self, scarce recognizable, save by a few shreds of its clothing, from a self one never been at all, a lump gathers in the throat. Cara's laugh softened slowly to a smile, ashamed of its own fondness.

"I was a nice little thing," she sighed, frankly. Then she turned away and thought she would go to bed.

The eyes had no intention of allowing this. They had not been answered yet. With the too persistent questioning, "What will I be? what will happen? — who? — when? — why? — where?" and a whole dread catechism of others, they followed Cara about the room in her restless movements,

piercing certain wrappings about her soul, which crumbled like a mummy's envelopment when exposed to the air. She felt an absurd necessity to explain to the eyes, to plead, to justify herself, passionately; to accuse others as she had felt with Miss Armitage. Well! she had eyes still. Eyes! what were they? Bits of perishable jelly, stuck with seeming haste into an ultimately perishable socket; mere sensitive films of nature's photography, owing their very color to nature's whim — what right had they to speak, mysteriously to affright from mirrors, to haunt in the dark, to melt the will, to transmit the fires of one heart to another, as they have done since the dawning of intelligence?

Cara walked desperately over and faced the photograph, which Miss Armitage should not have hung there to torment her before her time. Tut! the old lady had not known she was

coming.

"'What will you be?" she repeated, defiantly. "A pretty decent sort of woman after all, my young friend! So don't look so scornful. 'What will happen?' Oh, things will just break up, all at once, and people will expect you to break with them. 'Why?' Because two people were selfish instead of one, which is the ideal arrangement. 'Where?' It depends upon box receipts, you stare-cat!" And with an angry wrench she twisted the wire so that the picture faced the wall.

Then she blew out the candle, before recollecting that she was but halfundressed. She did not care. She
lay down as she was on the bed, and
her own eyes stared out into the
darkness, and in a few moments the
other eyes stole out from behind the
picture, as she had known they would,
and tried to stare her down. And
they were her own eyes, too. What
nonsense! One becomes a new person
every seven years—sooner, if one has
a husband—and it was a farther cry
than that for her—back to fifteen and
girlhood.

"Yes!" she burst out, finally; "I know you look like Billy; I knew that

was what you were trying to say! But he chose to look more like his father, so I left him there. Heavens, what a hard bed! I won't stay in it."

She sprang up and felt with her hands for the cloak on the floor, then lay down with her face in its satin She did not cry. She tossed and saw the eyes and felt the hardness of the floor. And the cloak had something on it; she could not rest her cheek there. Those clever eyes! Bertram Fanning, when wrapping this cloak about her, had drawn his hands over her shoulders more slowly and softly than there was need for, till they had almost met beneath her chin. And she had shaken them off, with the same restless gesture with which she had later rid herself of the cloak, but had not rebuked him, because he was writing a play which was to rebuild her fallen fortunes. There, eyes, you have the worst of it, and if you were fifteen years older you would know that there are worse worsts! She was no one's wife. But Mrs. Fanning was! Oh, unprofitable, unprofitable, all this threshing out of the day's problems in the night's silence! And her face burned; laid next that cloak. rose and tried the bed again.

Every one sleeps, unless an Inquisition officer watches him. It would be untrue to say that an occasional blur of oblivion did not pass across Cara's unrested mind. But it was what the average unprincipled sufferer calls a sleepless night, or fragment of a night. With its first disappearance into dawn Cara was up, writing at the little spindle-legged escritoire close to the window.

As she flitted through the hall, looking like a gray ghost in a green cloak, she stopped at Miss Armitage's door and slipped the note where it would fall at the turning of the knob. She had written:

PATIENT MISS HELENA:

It almost makes me stay to say good-bye, to think how you will not blame me for not staying. But I cannot. I have a habit of leaving houses when they make me unhappy, and yours does, dear Miss Helena. If you had not put that stare-cat

child up on my wall I could have stayed to breakfast. But now I don't wish any breakfast. Do not worry about me, though. That play of Fanning's promises to be fine, and if I am successful I shall be all right, for you have probably discovered that I am A CARA WITHOUT MUCH HEART.

VII

Ir "the inimitable Cara Melville," as Fanning fiercely but ineffectually called her day after day in the Eagle's dramatic column, had thought that by acting in this way she would forfeit the friendship of Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage she would have acted otherwise. But she reckoned with full knowledge of her True, Miss Armitage did not hostess. call again at the "plush place," so they missed meeting during the few days that remained of Cara's engagement in the city; but letters passed between them afterward, which was astonishing. That Cara should receive a wistful little Christian-spirited note in copper-plate handwriting was only to be expected, and had, in fact, been confidently banked on by that wayward but intelligent young person. But that Miss Armitage should receive from one city after another, as westward the tour of Cara took its way, long, slightly affectionate and highly amusing letters was one of eternal surprises with which Cara enlivened her friend's existence; though, of course, if Cara wrote letters at all they would be good letters. Box receipts were rather better at Cleveland, she wrote blithely from that city. Oh, if Miss Armitage only knew the joys of acting! Why should she refuse, unswayable creature that she was, even the tempered bliss of seeing her friends act!

"Jessica," the play Fanning was writing for Cara, was really something remarkable, far better than one would have believed him capable of. The title character was one which it was foreordained she should interpret. Fanning was forwarding it to her in instalments, as fast as he could write

it. When it should be finished, goodbye to this ghastly business of amusing the unamusable. The season of Summer rest, which was close at hand, should see a Cara Melville rolled up in a brown cocoon of study, out of which she would emerge a brilliant marvel, with "Jessica" for wings.

So she wrote; but, instead, the warm weather saw her cruising on the coast of Maine in the yacht of a young society woman of the Blanche Armitage stamp, who had fallen under the spell of Cara-Melvillity, and her favor promised almost as much for Cara's future as did "Jessica." Miss Armitage was slightly disappointed. Nothing daunted by past rebuffs, she had asked Cara to spend the Summer with her at a watering-place.

Bertram Fanning was more than disappointed; he was savage. Manner got permanently mislaid; he never took it home and now it could not be found at the office, save by utter strangers. About the only place where any of it was to be seen was in the Armitage house, where he was afraid to go without it. He visited there quite often-for society information, he said, which Miss Armitage gave him freely, though wishing he would not always lead up to Cara in that completely unmarried way; still, to be sure, he was writing a play with Cara as model, and what did she, Helena Armitage, understand?

And, as it happened, Cara did very well not to accept the invitation. For a ne'er-do-weel cousin of Miss Armitage's, of a degree of removal which, though distant, was less distant than the other Armitages could wish, was ending a troublesome career in a troublesome way. A telegram notified his relatives that he had betaken himself to a New York hospital to die and wished some one of his own blood at hand to close his eyes. Miss Armitage was the only one who conceived it her duty to remain in town in order to be at hand whenever needed. Mrs. Athelstan Armitage said it was ridiculous, especially as the unpopular relative did not die, but lingered from day to day, from week to week, wasting the time of his betters as he had wasted their money all his dawdling life. But Miss Armitage stayed cheerily on through the heat and proposed to remain even till September, when there would be a biennial convention of Daughters in the metropolis and she could entertain a number of delegates under her vine and figtree.

And so, one hot July day, Cara and her friend met on an elevated train, to their mutual surprise.

"You, Cara? I thought you were on

a yacht?"

"Well, think so, then, my dear girl, if it pleases you to imagine the cool breezes fanning my brow, while the mint juleps—"

"Cara, you don't touch those things?"

"If you would let me finish—I was about to say that they were being used by the sailors to swab the decks. That yacht suits me very well, Miss Helena. You are the only person, I hope, who knows that I was set off at Kennebunkport and came here by rail. There are times when a yacht is a refuge from the stormy blast, even if you don't make it your eternal home."

Miss Armitage did not like to ask her not to use the language of hymns so carelessly. Cara did not look as though she would bear much interference. She confessed to worrying

horribly about "Jessica."

"It is pure absurdity, I know," she said. "The thing is clever, but there are other plays; and there is always comedy left if I fail in the serious line—and there are even other actresses left if I die of heartbreak over the failure. And yet that is the way I feel—that I couldn't bear it if anything should prevent my creating that particular part in that particular play. I contributed so many suggestions to it, and it came like such a ray of hope at such a black time, that to lose it would be like losing another child. My career is the last thing I have left to lose."

Her friend glanced at her sympathetically and quickly moved her narrow shoulders in an attempt to screen three people from Cara's sight. They were a mother and two children, who occupied a seat several spaces ahead, across the aisle. The maternal instinct was quiescent in Miss Armitage. Sentimentalists do not know that there are such women, until such assume — or, indeed, abandon — responsibilities like to Cara's. But each of these thinks she stands alone among her sex, and Miss Armitage clung tenaciously to an orthodox idea that the wolfish, unhappy look in her friend's eyes owed at least something to the children who had died, to the other one to whom she herself had died. This woman across the way had a boy, too, to awaken painful thoughts in Cara.

But Cara did not seem to mind. She bestowed a glance on the children now and then, but during most of the time closed her eyes in weariness. She was plainly very, very tired. Miss Armitage kept a wary eye on the children, fearful that they might become too noisy. They came very near it. The big boy had lugged the younger child, a tiny thing with a shrill laugh several times too loud for her diminutive body, up into his lap and was clapping her bits of hands inside his own, laughing very heartily. He was a nice boy, Miss Armitage conservatively admitted to herself. He had big, square teeth that showed constantly in a good-tempered smile, honest eyes and a manner that showed far more consideration and affection for a little sister than twelve-year-old boys are wont to display. There was something almost paternal, well-nigh pathetic, in the devotion with which he catered to her whims, bending his blond head, recently shaved so closely for Summer as to resemble a ball of plush, that she might claw all over it in disappointed search for a lock long enough to pull; cuddling her in the hollow of his arm and letting her "play go sleepy," laughing almost as sympathetically as the mother at her baby rages and reconciliations.

He was a nice boy in other ways, too. He picked up packages when his mother dropped them from her lap, a twentieth-century marvel; when, in crossing the aisle to help a young lady who was struggling with a window-blind, he stumbled over Miss Armitage's bag, which was projecting unlawfully, he said, politely, "Please excuse me, madam," and carefully put it next to its own-His jacket brushed averted face. Miss Armitage did not understand these things, but she feared they might be painful. When the train next stopped she asked, "Would you like to change your seat, Cara?"

Cara looked up. "Why should I change my seat?" she queried, in surprise. And, after all, the children were leaving the train here—or, no, it was only the boy, who eagerly kissed the little girl good-bye, raised his cap to his mother, swung off the car and then, just before it started again, showed his round, dimpling, somewhat reddened face at the window. "Oh," he said, shyly, passing in a tight, grimy ball of something hurriedly drawn from a pocket, "would my gum-drops make your little girl very sick?" And he disappeared.

He nearly took Miss Armitage's eyes with him. "Then he isn't her son?" she exclaimed, finally, transferring her gaze to Cara.

"No," said Cara; "he's mine."

"What!"

"He was Billy," repeated Cara. She was very white. Miss Armitage secretly wondered if she could be mistaken. It seemed such an extraordinary thing to recognize one's child after six years. Suddenly she felt her hand gripped painfully hard.

"His little white head," Cara whispered; "just as it looked when he was a baby, on the ranch, before everything had changed. Miss Helena, isn't it strange that, no matter how busy you are, or how happy you are"—she did not look happy as she

said it-"you never get away from things like that?"

"I suppose not, dear. I did not

know you felt so."
"I knew it," said Cara. "Oh, yes, I knew it, all right. But you can't ask many favors of a man you have struck in the face, and you can't go back and live with one you hate as the Almighty Himself hates sin," her voice growing deep and grating, "so there seemed no particularly easy way of my seeing Billy. Please let us stop talking of Billy! I know you care more for the Daughters."

VIII

Bur Miss Armitage did not cease thinking of Billy. It seemed part of her duty to Cara, for whom there was so little else that she could do, since that obstinate person would not come under her roof and sensibly save hotel bills while she studied "Iessica." And the end of her thought was a ring one day at a door-bell with "Melville" on it, a dignified inquiry for the master of the great, moribund-looking house, whose many closed windows and general exterior aspect somehow proclaimed its lack of a mistress, and the ushering of a somewhat frightened old lady in a muddy, bedraggled skirt into the drawing-room, where the son and heir of the house sat cross-legged on a satin sofa, with a book on his knees and a mucilage bottle at his side.

Vague as were Miss Armitage's data about children, she felt reasonably sure that they, especially boys, did not harmonize with satin sofas. How neglected this poor child must be!

"Good afternoon," said the poor child, politely, rising to push forward a chair. "It's hotter than Ecuador since the rain, isn't it? I was pasting in a stamp from Ecuador when you came and that made me think of it. Oh, jee-whitaker! that mucilage has done it again!" And with an awful handkerchief he dabbed at the sticky stream trickling slowly down the the slope of the sofa.

"Who will scold you for that?" inquired Miss Armitage, in her quick,

sparrow-like way.

"Nobody, now. Grandma used to, but she's dead now," his bright, affectionate eyes filling suddenly with tears, "and papa will never know it. He's very absorbed, but he's beginning now to bring me stamps from the office. Do you collect stamps and have you duplicates you don't want? or postmarks? I collect them, too."

"Why, no; but I have a cousin who is a missionary in Mombasa. I might write to him to send me some stamps

from there."

"That would be almost too splendid," said the boy, smiling like Cara. How could Cara say he resembled any one else? "You can buy stamps, but you can't buy postmarks. I'm so glad you came to see us. Shall I tell papa you are here?"

"Yes. Give him my card and say that I am a friend of your moth-

er's."

The boy turned back from the door. With a brush of his arm he shut it and came close to her. "Do you know my mother?" he asked, breathlessly. All the heart-hunger of a lonely child, which a more experienced observer would have read in his actions toward the woman and baby in the train, had leaped up into his face. "Oh, I am so very glad you came to see us! I don't meet any people who know her and she never comes here at all. I've seen her, though!"

"You have seen her?" exclaimed

Miss Armitage.

"Why, yes. She is an actress, you know. Anybody can pay to see her. Papa was angry that I knew it. But how could I help but see her name on posters all around? So-I had a nurse I could do anything with and I made her take me, twice. Papa doesn't know that. I dived under the seats every time I saw a man with a beard like his. I think mamma is lovely, though the nurse said I would not know her off the stage. How queer that you should know her!"

Oh, Cara, Cara! A moment's spasm of intense anger contracted Miss Armitage's heart and drew it worlds away, sympathetically speaking, from her whose shameful impatience, whose light repudiation of solemn pledges, whose cheap craving for adulation and the whirl of the senses had left herself only a legend in this boy's life, to be stubbornly cherished with the secret devotion with which childish loyalty always invests a parent little heard of. See now what ruin, Cara Melville! However brilliant smile, or fascinating your personality, you have robbed a child!

As quickly as an exhalation, however, Miss Armitage's momentary wrath was gone. She asked to see Mr. Melville, and the boy clattered before her up-stairs to the library. It was a beautiful house, she noticed, with Cara's taste—the taste of six years back—still eloquent in all the none-

too-well-dusted furnishings.

A large man, with one of those heavily bearded faces whose expression is inaccessible, rose when she entered the library, but kept his thumb in his book. There is said to be character in thumbs. In the thumb retained in the book there certainly was. With one hand he brushed his brow, as though conscious that the frown of the disturbed man was still there. So, this was Cara's "stone!"

"Papa, this lady is Miss Helena Virginia Gerv—Guv—"stumbling over the name; "anyway, she has a card." Then, though she was a friend of his mother's, he left the room. His grandmother had evidently brought him up

very well.

"A friend of Cara's," supplemented the lady.

"Did she send you here?" demanded the man.

"Cara?" shocked. "Oh, no; she never dreamed of such a thing!"

"Then why did you?" abruptly. "Pardon my shortness, but I will discuss my private affairs with nobody.

There have been a great many like you—" which showed how little he knew—"who have come to try to reconcile us. But I will talk with none of them."

"Oh, you quite misunderstand me!" -hands and eyes oscillating with earnestness. "I have no such desire. On the contrary, now I have met you, I am convinced that you and Cara never were meant for each other. But I have been thinking that there was something I could do for her, now that she is so downhearted and discouraged, and at the same time for you, to whom, as her husband, and not, of course, treated altogether properly by her, I owe something. thought that, if you liked, I would take the-your son for a short visit." She considered Billy a rowdy name and did not like to pronounce it. "I owe something to him, too."

William Melville's expression was not quite so inaccessible. "My son?" he slowly repeated. "What would

you do with him?"

"I do not wholly know, I'm sure," a little faintly. "I am not accustomed to children and not very fond of them; but I suppose I should get used to it. He is not very noisy, is he?"

Melville looked her up and down. She had stirred the stone with the most irresistible of emotions—surprise. "This is really very extraordinary," he said, brusquely. "In what way would you be assisting me by taking from me the last thing I have left to care for?"

"Oh, excuse me! Cara said you didn't care, or I would not have presumed. I only thought how lonely he must be. In my house he would at least have a woman's oversight. He needs it," with a thought of the mucilage on the sofa.

The man made no answer. At first he knit his brows and surveyed Miss Armitage, while Miss Armitage surveyed him. "And she could come and see him," he said, finally, "if she cares to see him—to her heart's content."

"She does care," replied his visitor,

simply. "She is his mother, you know."

"She has made no attempt to see him in six years," said Melville, whose expression had gone back into his beard.

"But it was because she hated you so," Miss Armitage apologized, "if you will pardon my mentioning such a thing. Of course, you have the right to refuse to let her see him. I know very little about men, but I am told they are very unforgiving when a woman has once done anything."

"When she has carried one's name all over two continents on bill-boards,' said Melville; he spoke very slowly, as though the words were being torn bit by bit from an angry mind; his eyes had at last lighted up; "when she has given the right—since you talk of rights—to every man, woman and, in these precocious days, child, to peer and examine and speculate about her virtue; when she has left her child to the mercies of a man whom she herself has said she cared nothing for; when she dissolved, in an instant, the ties of eight years without an explaining word, with a public scandal, with the deepest insult a man can deal a man, and capped it with the deepest insult a woman can deal a man!" The voice from the stone startled Miss Armitage; it was like the hollow tones of Memnon speaking.

"Without a word, I tell you, either before or after!" he continued, furiously. "Why do I tell you? Oh, well, I might as well go on, and you can return and give her the satisfaction of knowing that the spot she struck Miss Armitage's imagiburns yet.' nation saw the sinister outlines of a hand in the red that rose at the man's "If I had committed some thought. unconscious crime, could she not have told me? If she had suddenly lost her mind, had I not a right to know it? Or, if there was some other man—do you think it is pleasant to wonder if there was some other man?"

"I should think that impossible," spoke Cara's friend, thoughtfully. "But, then, I knew Cara before you

did. It was undoubtedly very wrong for her to withhold her reasons when you asked her."

Melville did not look at his visitor. "I did not ask her. She struck me in the face. Let her explain why she did it."

Miss Armitage gazed at him with a sudden instinctive compassion for the helplessness of selfishness. "Don't you know?" she asked, half-doubting. He made a negative gesture. "I can tell you!"

Melville continued to look at her. "Then tell me," he said.

She did tell him—simply, serenely, fully, drawing from the storehouse of a fatally circumstantial memory nearly every word which had passed between Cara and herself. The stabbing eyes of the Cara on the wall were not omitted; the passion of hatred that woke at his name was not slurred over; she even betrayed poor Billy's secret of the stolen glimpses of his lost mother. Into her mind any idea of treachery in so doing did not once enter. As for the man, it is difficult to feel one has no right to hear information which closely concerns one's So he listened, and even under the thick beard Miss Armitage saw him grow red, then white.

He did not interrupt her once while she talked, nor did he at first speak when she had finished. He sat staring somberly before him—so long that Billy, thinking the guest must have gone, came and opened the door. His father shook his head, and the boy ran away. But this made a break, and Melville began to defend himself, in the short, torn sentences with which he was wont to express himself.

"I thought I was giving her what she wanted and had been deprived of for so long. I laid no hindrance on her enjoyment of all the gaiety her heart could wish. I let her alone in every way."

"And caring so much for her society, too," commented Miss Armitage, sympathetically. "Every one finds Cara so droll and bright a companion. She did not understand the sacrifice. I fear."

Those prehensile eyes of hers seemed to seize on truth and drag it out to light, willy nilly. preoccupied," he admitted. gruffly. "I had a new business to establish, and—I did not like New York very well after the ranch, and —I see now that I did not talk very much, or appear to notice Billy as much as I perhaps should have done. The fact is, when I saw that white head of his I was as apt as not to remember that there had been two brown ones, too—the children we lost looked like Cara—and, somehow, I could not speak. That thing had hit us both hard. But Cara seemed dancing it off."

"Pity you could not do so, too, wasn't it?" He looked startled, but she continued, briskly: "I know very little about it, naturally, but I should suppose that the good Lord who took them would prefer that to your home being broken up. But, of course, no one could help it. Cara is as she is—all life, all expression—and I suppose it was that very vivacity which tired you. I myself am disturbed by the animation of—" She was about to add "children," but thought of Billy.

Melville had been pulling at his beard. "You both seem very sure I was tired of her," he said, sullenly. Perhaps Socrates was the only man who, placed on his self-defense, presented a sublime spectacle. The feat is not easy. "I was tired," he burst out, before she could answer. "That comes as one grows older. The glaze going off everything, the drying of all the juices of hope in one, the disappointments and cares of life—how can one help growing gray and heavy in the soul as in the body?"

"I have the Daughters," said Miss Armitage. "They are a great resource. Of course, you do not have anything like that to take you out of yourself. It is very unfortunate, but no one's fault." She rose to go, convinced that there was nothing to be gained and guiltily relieved that

there was not. The virginal quiet of her household was not to be disturbed by the alarming clatter of a boy! "I am sorry you will not let me take—William," she said.

"I did not say you could not. But I doubt whether he would go. Billy!" opening the door. "Billy," as the child came stamping, more noisily than Miss Armitage's worst fears, down the parquetted hall, "you would not care, would you, to make a short visit at this lady's house?"

Billy's eyes brightened. "I think I should," he said, with decision. "She's got a cousin who's a missionary in Mombasa, and I'd get the stamps."

"I can buy you stamps, child. Think, there are no other boys there!" "But it would be somewhere different," said the twelve-year-old.

His father's lip curled a little. "Like." he murmured. "like—"

Cara's friend turned on him with lightning quickness. Her miniature furies were as disconcerting as would be the sudden belligerency of a humming-bird. "Don't dare to say that!" she panted. "No one has a right to judge any one else. I am a friend of Cara's, and shall always proclaim it."

"Yes," chimed in Billy, "she is a friend of mamma's. Papa, do let me go."

"Please yourself, then," said Melville. He did not say it quickly.

IX

"CARA, your boy is here."

Miss Armitage had been practising the words ever since Billy's advent, rolling them like a morsel of sweetness under her tongue. But, now that Cara, who, she had thought, would never come, had at last appeared, they trembled in the speaking. She pushed her friend into a room where a mucilaginous Billy unsuspectingly brooded over the stamp album. She did not stay to see, or hear. She did not think it would be nice. She even mounted up to the third story, so as not to hear the mother's sobs.

such there should be—and she was by no means sure that anything could make Cara cry—she knew Cara would not wish them to be heard.

There was plenty to do up-stairs. An intriguing fellow-clubwoman had written to suggest that she, Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage, signify her willingness to represent the Daughters at the coming convention, if enough members could be found to desert to her standard from that of a personally unpopular but duly appointed delegate. This Miss Armitage did not think a suitable subject for one of her bubbles of wrath. She merely wrote the misguided member a letter of great mildness and length, pointing out that she, Miss Armitage, was not fitted to represent a fly. It was an engrossing letter and she was genuinely surprised when a servant hunted her out to announce dinner.

Billy must be fed, of course. Miss Armitage had a vague impression that something happened immediately to a boy left hungry. So, she dropped her pen and went down to her guests. No, Cara had not cried. Her pale face had the soft, shining newness of expression one sees in that of a girl to whom love—welcome love—has just been declared. Billy, with his white head hugged up tightly against her and with his gummy hands besmearing her gown, was tranquilly explaining to her the intricacies of the stamp album spread out over her knees. He did not look hungry. Miss Armitage stole out of the room, but Cara sprang up, with a mighty scattering of stamps, and ran out after her in the hall. "You-you-you-" she was almost sobbing now-"you friend! How did you do it? What did he the other—say?"

"Only things to pain you, Cara. The moment I saw him I knew that all you said was true. He apologized, however, for having tired of you. He said he could not help it."

Cara bit her lip. "With what other observations," she asked, coldly, "did he favor you?"

"He spoke of your leaving your child with a man who cared nothing for him—" Cara made a passionate, unintelligible exclamation—"and—and your dancing, and said I could tell you that the insult burned yet. He seemed quite bitter, Cara. I wish it had been otherwise."

"To what end?" asked Cara, quickly.
"I would play every part on the stage and off before that of the repentant wife. There is yet plenty of good, juicy corn inside the husks for me!"

Corn suggested dinner. It was charming of Cara to come out and sit at the table, with Billy's head still on her shoulder, both of them accepting, praising everything, but too excited to eat. "May I come every day?" she asked wistfully, when the shadows sent her home.

"If you do not, my dear, you will deal me the last shock," was the somewhat unexpected reply.

Every day Cara came—and Miss Armitage never stayed in the room. She even shyly turned her back when Billy came racketing down the long stairs, three at a time, to spring on his mother's neck and kiss her. But Cara said very little—unless, indeed, to Billy. Miss Armitage began slowly to surmise that in the union of two undemonstrative natures there had been no strength.

Billy's visit, however, was to be a brief one. Within less than two weeks Miss Armitage received a telegram from Billy's father, which she was obliged to show to Cara.

Coming to-morrow, take Billy, leaving town.

MBLVILLE.

"Hooray!" shouted Billy, who had read it over his mother's shoulder. Cara started as though she had been struck. "Do you want to leave me?" she asked.

"No, no," said the boy, miserably; "I was just excited to think of going somewhere, that's all. Won't I see you again, mother? But, you know, I haven't seen father for two weeks, and I've lots of new stamps to show him. He's all the father I've got."

Cara rose to the occasion with real

sweetness. "I have earned this," she said, quietly, to Miss Armitage. Common sense had been one of Cara's prevailing characteristics even when sixteen. "I am only an episode—perhaps it is as well that I should last no longer. I shall write him letters when I star all round the world in 'Jessica,' and he will at least prize the stamps." She embraced the old lady with unusual affection and she did not break down over Billy. It was good, thought her friend, that she had "Jessica" left her.

Those were days of telegrams—a product of civilization which never failed to produce agitation in the breast of Miss Armitage. While she waited with Billy for Mr. Melville to arrive, another "yellow peril" was handed her. This fulfilled the dread primal purpose of telegrams. It told her that some one was dying—the cousin

in the hospital.

"I shall be there immediately," said Miss Armitage, fluttering. "No; I must wait, because I must receive a gentleman who is to call. Oh, dear,

what shall I do?"

She compromised, waiting an hour longer. Mr. Melville did not come, and might not come for hours, since he had set no time in his telegram. And the soul and body on which the name of Armitage had been wasted were quietly slipping away from each other in the hospital. It must not be. Miss Armitage shook hands with Billy—she shrank from kissing boys—left numerous apologies, explanations, compliments of the season and other amenities in his charge for safe delivery to his father, and went to the hospital.

The cousin clutched her hand. He was too far gone to speak. Blood faintly touched with blood in that instant of supreme loneliness, and it was worth a Summer's waiting. Miss Armitage sat without unclasping her hand long after she knew her cousin was dead. All the Melvilles in the world of struggle faded from her mind in that hour's contact with the world of peace.

The hansom waiting before her door on her return recalled them, and she hurried into the house, pleased to be able to perform the duties of a hostess in spite of all. "So Mr. Melville has come?" she said to the servant.

"No'm; Mrs. Melville." The girl spoke with traces of excitement. "From the way things look, I think she's goin' away with Mr. Billy in the

carriage."

The girl dived down to the kitchen with a breathless bulletin for the cook. "She gave me one snub with those eyes of hern, but I noticed she was up-stairs as quick as sixteen. Come up softly and open the stair door, and you'll hear everything they say."

What they heard first was Miss Armitage's voice, not angry, but eager, emphatic, as was its wont, even

in times of peace.

"No, Cara; there is no use in attempting this. You shall not take the boy away. Billy—" in her excitement she called him that—"go out into the hall and sit on your value again!"

Cara's reply was so inaudible that

the listeners ground their teeth.

"No, Cara; he is not yours. Excuse my mentioning it, but you once abandoned him of your own free will. Cara, Cara, don't weep! you distract me, and you do not shake me. You not take him from this house, unless it is over my dead body!" The earnest sentences rang out clear as the ring of a true dollar on the testing hearth. The watchers below could not see how she put out her frail sticks of arms to span and block the passageway, as though she expected personal violence. Billy, too, began crying to her.

"It is of no use," she answered him, as though he were grown up. "I am your mother's friend and always shall be, but your father intrusted you to me, and I shall give you back into his hands and no others." She wished for Isabel, to explain to Cara how un-

swavable she was.

"I want my child," said the other woman, softly. "I want my child!" Cara stood quite still, as if expect-



ing that she need say no more. She had said it as women say things on the stage, making other women weep. Yet how she meant it!

"No," said her friend.

There was a sound. Both the eavesdroppers felt sure the mother had dropped on her knees. Billy cried noisily.

"Bill—William, go back and sit on your valise," said Miss Armitage, breathlessly. "Cara, do you mind accompanying me down-stairs?"

Miss Armitage touched Cara's arm, and the mother, yielding to the gentle gesture, went with her down the stairs, to the street door, which Miss Armitage herself opened.

A moment later the door closed, softly.

\mathbf{X}

CARA, quite motionless, remained outside the door, with her body crowded close against it, nearly effaced in its shadow. Nearer than this, she knew, she would never again approach to Billy. Shielded by the dusk, she bent her head to let a few drops fall on the stone step. Hers was not a passionate nature; but the fuse, hard to light, burned implacably in the hidden chambers of her heart.

A man dashed around the corner a man without many minutes' margin for the train he must make after leaving the Armitage residence with his son—his only son. Cara knew him at once. She had not looked on his face for six years, nor he on hers. There was full time for her to slip down the steps and escape him, but in the stupidity of panic the thought did not occur to her. Instead, she crushed herself more closely back into the shadow, trembling, to her own acute vexation, watching him with that brooding, mordant hatred, so strange to men, felt by a woman for a person she has once loved. With it, of course, she felt a throb—the aching of the lost relation, like pain in a member long ago condemned, cut off, buriedutterly beyond recall or wish of recall.

He rushed up the steps and rang the bell before he saw her, and then—started back, as he had done once at a blow on the cheek. Well, William Melville, is the face of your wife a basilisk? Say something, man, that she may sting you with contemptuous silence; but say nothing gentle, nothing in the tone of old days, lest in her craving loneliness she clutch at a hollow truce, the false and feeble and unutterably pathetic hope of reëstablishing an edifice destroyed! It would be impossible to let such a moment pass without speaking at all!

Impossible, perhaps, to a man keenly sensitive to woman's influence. The servant had opened the door and the light streamed out on the man's face, blotting the woman's, in the covert of the door, into more impenetrable shadow. His look was grave, searching, stubbornly secretive of emotion—the look, not of the husband for the wife, but of the man for the woman, which is quite different. It put an ocean between them—that deep, cold counter-current of sex antagonism, which underlies the warm surface ripple of sex attraction and into which the latter indeed sometimes merges itself when the noonday sun removes. Then, raising his hat, the man passed into the house, where the welcome of its hostess awaited him, the demonstrative affection of his son, his son—leaving his wife without a word, to crouch condemned out in the darkness, like a wailing virgin in the parable. How did he know she had a home to go to? or, rather, did he not know she had none?

"You cold and selfish man!" she suddenly called after him, her voice breaking with its weight of aversion. Then she hurried down the steps to the cab, which had all the time been patiently waiting.

The cunning of fate is the cunning of a child. The smallest baby knows by some intuitive power when there is trouble, distraction, anything abnormal, in the home atmosphere, and with apparent malice adds its cries to the turmoil or seizes the moment for some infantine coup it has

long been meditating.

As Cara sprang from the cab on reaching the hotel, eager to hide her face—for a few more tears had fallen on the way—she learned that there was a caller to be seen. She frowned at the name, but did not dare to frown at the man when, a few minutes later, she swept in to see him, her face now rehabilitated in composure and her body arrayed, as ever, in a beautiful gown. What has ever befriended a woman as has her gown? The singular hypnotic effection made on the minds of others by a few yards of silk or satin swathed in a certain manner about these, our frail bodies, is one of invulnerability to all shafts. cannot snub a woman thus clothed. You cannot think of her as otherwise than insolently happy, any more than you can dream that the lighted homes you see from the dark streets below can shelter cares like yours.

"How is it you are here?" Cara cried. "Has anything happened to 'Jessica'? Do you know, we shall make something great of that, to-

gether?"

"I am glad of it," said Fanning, with a little of The Manner. "I like to do things—together. Did you bring the manuscript with you?"

She nodded, and handed it to him. He brushed the folded sheets out smoothly on his knee. "Is this the only copy you have?" he inquired.

She nodded again.

"Can't you speak to me?" he exclaimed, fretfully, as we address those who belong to us. "If you appreciate the play so much, you might appreciate the man who wrote it. You went, or pretended to go, on that yachting cruise just to deceive and escape me."

"Such nonsense!" said Cara, vaguely. It was an un-Cara-like remark, and she felt it. She rose and, rather hoarsely humming a flippant little tune, went to a table by the window. On it stood a neglected-looking globe

of dingy greenish water, languidly circumnavigated by three moribund gold-fish. She had not chosen an expensive hotel this time. While she hummed, she broke a cracker lying on a plate beside the globe and fed the crumbs to the fish. But one cannot escape atmospheres by merely turning one's back, above all, by turning it on a man who rises and follows. His face was almost over her shoulder-shining almost greenish-pale on its long, thin neck, which jerked convulsively-looking queerly like the bald pod of a blown dandelion on its attenuated stem.

"What do you want?" she asked,

quickly stepping back.

"The old thing," he answered, still more quickly. "What Howell Grannis wanted, what they all wanted. No! you need not tell me you sent him back to England. I know it. He talked to me before he went. I know you send them all somewhere. You shall not send me anywhere, though I, too, want it. Cara! are you not almost ready to give it to some one?"

"Perhaps," she answered—his face moved still nearer, hers was turned— "you offer no reasons or inducements, however, that it should be you to

whom I give it."

"If I have not offered them," he said, passionately, "it is because you have employed every means, human or divine or diabolical, to keep me from offering them. Offer! Do I not offer you all I have or am likely to have in the world, and count it nothing in comparison with your love? Listen, Cara; you have heard plenty of such talk, have you not?"

"Oh, dear, yes," she said, with that wonderful woman's lightness which a pitying God added just before He sent out a thing so weak to strive with things so strong. "It's a cuckoosong. And worth about as much."

"Very well. But tell me something more. Are you likely to hear so much of it in future? Nothing succeeds like success, Cara! But I—loved you in your failure."

"Yes," she said, "you did."
The weariness in her eyes lifted a The buried ashes of one moment. who has done creative work would stir under the foot of him who, however unworthy in other ways, had intelligently appraised—which means praised—that work. The man caught at the propitious moment.

"I would love you," he cried, "if all the world should hiss you down!"

"You would need to," she said, with the slowness of one who is thinking out her words. "All the world would do so—if I let you love me."

"But you don't care what people You have already defied them think. once, to do what it pleased you to do."

"Yes," she admitted. She sank her chin on her hand and studied himhis long, strong form, trembling with agitation, his craving eyes, which could not leave her face. She could almost see his heart heaving under her gaze. After all, hearts were hearts. Still—I think it would be best to be sensible, Fanning," she said, in a low

He sprang up as at a signal. "That's the best word from you yet," he said, coming so close in his height and strength that Cara, herself a tall woman, had the feeling of suffocation, helplessness, of the wayfarer in a tiny street half-closed by beetling buildings. "To be sensible means to take love when we can get it and to be mighty thankful for it, Cara. Oh, Cara, I love you-I love you dreadfully, against a lot of prejudices I had formed, against your adamantine pride and self-sufficiency-"

"Against all right and justice," she

interrupted.

"Never mind about that. We are not in the infant school, learning lies from chalked texts, of snakes rising from the wine-glass. It's the empty heart where the worm crawls, Cara, and I'll venture you know it! We are a robust man and a living woman, with red blood in our veins to feed and with work to do. What strength for yours or mine is going to come from gnawing husks?"

"About as much as from eating deadly nightshade," said Cara. She said it so quietly that he pressed even nearer. He had seen many women, after fencing, yield to many men—on the stage, which chalks up lies coequally with the infant school. But she shook her head. "Enough of this," she said, sharply, since saying it gently seemed ineffectual. Women are always slow in learning some "Are pride and self-suffithings. ciency the only words you can use the only words you can understand for my attitude toward you and a horde of jackals like you?" A small speck of scarlet began to swim before her eyes. "Did you never hear of virtue? Don't you know a good woman when you meet her?"

"When I meet her," he said, delib-

erately; "but I seldom do."

Cara's eyes swept him up and down, with actual wonder in them. He stared sleekly back at her, with the last shred of The Manner cast from him, naked and not ashamed, gleaming in his hard cleverness as gleams the dead moon, with sheer inability to absorb the light pouring around him to the quickening of one atom of that unfertile surface. Self-proclaimed a good woman, self-accused, Cara nourished with anguish a thousand gnawing doubts of it. Stained and despairing men had stumbled around her in the pits of bohemia, yet, holding ever above their sinking heads some last treasure of belief in something—a white womanhood, a loyal manhood, a pure Godhead—dying, if they died, with eyes fixed glassily on the fading yet ineffable beauty of an ideal. But here was one for whom the doubt, the struggle, the aspiration simply were not.

"I did not know your soul was bald too," she said. "I could not love you,

even if I were not married."

"Why, you don't consider yourself married, do you?" he asked, insolently.

Cara could redden. She felt a sudden thankfulness for it. "Perhaps not," she said; "but you are."

"I don't care if I am," said Fanning.

"What right have you to talk? You set the fashion for this sort of thing. I married too young. My wife and I are not congenial. We are not living together now, if that fact has any weight with you."

She uttered an involuntary excla-

mation.

"I don't care," he repeated. "She will get used to it. I'm providing for her properly. It's all her fault, anyhow. She never took any interest in my interests. She would not read a book. She never looked at what I wrote. She just sank her life in vulgar, trifling cares."

"You seemed to think so," retorted Fanning. The brute beneath the polish—the ape within the man—was each instant more apparent. "You seem also to forget, my dear, that you are talking to the author of 'Jessica.' Do you imagine that I am going to give you everything—even the intellectual flower of my life, the best I ever did or am likely to do—and receive nothing in return but reviling?"

Cara's hand had been clenched. It dropped loosely at her side. She absolutely had not thought of this. Fortunately, she could always speak quietly. "Is that your trump card?"

she asked.

"Yes," he said, boldly; "it is."

"You have no right! You wrote it for me, you promised it to me. And I promised to share the receipts. Everything was fair and square." She put her hand up to her eyes. Stricken

hopes were reeling about her.

"You'll have to promise more than that, Cara Melville. I may have no right, but I have possession." He twisted the manuscript brutally as he spoke, having drawn it from his pocket. "I'll give it to no other woman," he burst out. He did love her. "I'll tear it to pieces—burn it—I don't know what I'll do with it, or myself or you, if you defy me this way."

"Make up your mind about it," said Cara. Her teeth were chattering. "I defy you! I want you to think of the meanness and cruelty of this, however. You know I banked my last

hopes here."

Fanning did not reply. With sullen, watching eyes he slowly tore the thick manuscript in half; the ruffled, swishing sound agonized them both. He lighted a match. She sobbed and put out a hand to stay him as he crossed to the empty fireplace. It was impossible not to believe it one of his poses. "Your future!" she cried. "In self-ishness, if in nothing else, stop."

"I don't care," repeated the man, violently. He threw lighted match and manuscript together into the fire-place, where, because it was "Jessica," they entered into instant relations. "There is one more copy," he almost whispered—"mine, at home. Cara,

for one kiss---"

"Give it to your wife," said Cara, shortly; "play, kiss, everything. I would not touch you to gain paradise."

There was a sharp interjection, a sudden forward-flinging movement of his body, the flash under her eyes of a glittering-white cuff with dazzling diamonds in it, all mingling so unexpectedly with the red cloud which was slowly rising about them, that for a moment she thought he was going to shoot her. She struggled back, not from the muzzle of a revolver, but from the frantic clutch of Fanning's hands upon her arm. He had seized it as if it were a detached thing, was pressing it defiantly to his heart, pushing up the soft lace of the elbow sleeves to cover it with quick, furious kisses, knowing that she would never lift her hand against another man.

But the strength of revulsion was in her. In a moment she was away from him, plunging the profaned arm again and again into the stagnant water of the aquarium beside her, which seemed a pure fountain by comparison with what had last touched it. Again and again she wiped wet arm and dripping sleeve on the silken folds of her gown hastily returning the profaned arm to the water, hurling words at him through the crimson cloud of anger which seemed to get into her throat like a fog.

"You men!" she cried, stopping to clasp her wet hands in intensity; "what do you not do! Oh, how I hate you! Oh, I am not strong enough to hold the hate I feel for you! I look strong, but I am not, or I would scorn you more!" She was sobbing in her wrath.

He looked up, startled, at her—a woman of splendid emotions, and now tremulous as a tinted leaf skimming in an Autumn wind—and realized what a tragic actress was here, lost to him

and "Jessica."

"You cause our griefs, our pains, our mistakes, and taunt us with them," she went on. "You talk of loving us, but you will joyfully ruin us. You boast yourselves above the savage in honoring us, but it is only when some other man stands between us and your insults. You swear to cherish us, but do it only so long as it is easy. Then you leave us, in body or in spirit, or both."

Woman's jealousy for woman, even stronger, because nobler, than her jealousy of woman, throbbed fiercely through Cara at the thought of the wife forsaken for her—lonely, wondering, sobbing, or perhaps stunned into dry grief-did not she, Cara Melville, know what it was? "Oh!" she cried, "what do we not suffer through you! And you—we cannot make you feel!"

"Cara," said Fanning, with eyes aflame, "I feel. I——"

Cara firmly crossed the room and touched the bell. She wondered that she had not thought of this before. Instantly there was a sharp responsive buzz. By the time the servant had answered it, to be sent about some trivial commission, Cara was alone—with the ashes of "Jessica," with the ashes of everything. The soaked carpet at her feet, the streaked and spattered garment that hung limp and ludicrous about her knees, were only symbolic of a world where what was not burned was spilled, and what was not spilled was ruined.

She felt suddenly that, as she had said, she was not strong. She felt

that she was going to die. should not be with her head in the The ranch was left—the ranch to which she had bought her ticket, and Billy's, too—the pity of it!—in that mad moment of planning a thing whose iniquity now struck her. She knew there would be no trouble about staying there. They had sold it to friends-in the days when it had been "they"—who, she had seen by the papers, were in Europe. No angel with the fiery sword there! Only peace, and gentle remembrance of her first and only home, before Will had changed and Billy grown and the two little mounds had been raised under the tiny wisps of trees. Back to Eden, Cara! but quickly, lest you find your garden trodden, your roof broken, the grass too tall over your first lover's head; for leave even Eden too long deserted, and its very site is lost upon the earth.

XI

In defiance of all progress, which would not be so bad if it were not in defiance of inevitability, what the human heart most consumingly desires is a return, not an advance. One of the greatest religions the world has ever produced beckons through its promise of a return to what we first sprang from, though that be Nothingness; one of the greatest novels of modern times fascinates through its visions, not of some wonderful beyond-life, but of the recovered grace of a day that is dead, as the goal of "dreaming true." The old home, though humble; the old friendship, though worn past all sweetness or serviceability—to these we creep, the spirit too faint for farther flights, when the stones of this world have broken our wings.

As the western express whirled Cara across states, as unconcernedly as a boy steps from one ant-hill to another, she sat and trembled all the way. It seemed impossible that something would not prevent her from

reaching the ranch. There would be an accident—and her life-loving body, its notion of dying already forgotten, recoiled terribly from the idea of being killed. Or, this train would not connect with Orion Station—and for the thousandth time she nervously consulted her time-table. Or, when she reached Orion, she would find the house burned down. Or, at best and least, the Mortons, who had bought it, would have had the unparalleled presumption to paint it, add porches and balconies, alter the interior—oh, horrible!—improve the grounds, perhaps, past recognition.

It would have been a different journey if Billy had accompanied her; Billy, whom she had excited with the promise of revisiting the home of his babyhood, already a paradise in his memory, so sorrowfully older had even Billy grown! Well, there were two little graves on the place. Of these Will Melville could not rob her.

if she could only reach them.

It suited her excellently that she should approach Orion Station close upon dusk. She had also provided herself with a thick veil. Country people have acute memories, and her face had appeared in the newspapers many, many times since this was her home. She was not afraid of the lonely road to the house. Twice she had ridden it, once walked it, with her frightened baby's voice wailing forlornly after her, to fetch the doctor while Will lay ill. As she had said, one never gets away from such things.

She did not need to walk it, however, for now there was an omnibus running on the highway to and from the station. Time does not stand still in the West. She asked the driver to set her down near the Mel-

ville ranch.

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"There ain't such a place," he said. She started. "Oh, you mean the Morton ranch! Used to be owned by parties named Melville—now I remember. Well, you strike out toward your right—I swan, she knows!"

She knew. The roof showed in

the starlight. And the grass grew long and neglected, almost to the eaves, an illusion of the distance. It was almost impossible for her to admit to herself the feelings with which she drew near to the house. So silent, so dark, so peaceful, so pitying, it stood with its long wings on either hand extended like shadowy arms of welcome-which in a flash, and by a flash, were blotted out, even as the thought came. A sudden illumination leaped out from one of the windows like a triumphsignal of fate, and never light appeared less kindly than did those rays to Cara Melville.

What did they mean? Perhaps tramps or robbers were in insolent possession. She crept closer to the window—that of the eating and living room, the first in which she had been wont to kindle a light. If they saw her thus spying they might kill her. This idea of being killed kept alternately thrilling, then repelling her, as with most unhappy people whose minds are practical. Nonsense! the Mortons had other friends who had taken the house for a week's or a Summer's camping. She crouched under the vine-hung window, wondering whether they would grudge her a moment's glance into her home. A voice arrested her. It was that of her husband, unheard for long.

"Billy," it said, "where is the cup?"
"Broken," said Billy, gaily.
"What are boys for? We can drink
from soup-plates till the things come."
Then they both laughed. Cara raised
her head and saw them sitting at the
table where she used to sit with them.

She did not look at the room, after all. Into every crack and cranny of its plank walls some bit of her own personality had slipped. On her knees, homely scrubbing-brush in hand, she had made the floors shine with cleanliness. The cupboard in the west corner was something she had knocked together herself, being a good carpenter for a woman in her days of success. On the door-jambs

should be two notches, not very far from the floor, proudly cut to mark the heights of two little heads that now were laid low. But she did not look at the room.

"This has been the dream of my life," murmured Billy, maturely, through mouthfuls of food, up-rolling rapt eyes, with fine, bold markings of splashed gravy under them. Will Melville was looking directly into them, where he must each moment see her, as she had seen and yearned toward him, with mingled love and hate in her heart, each rendered intolerable by the presence of the other. "But I'm going out in the morning to cut the high grass. Folks might hide in it."

Yes — his mother might. She might do this, after traveling twothirds of a continent to find a haven. A trouble of rage filled her soul—not red, like her anger against Fanning and, aforetime, against her husbandbut black and sad, like the darkness into which she was thrust. Had not this man enough in life, without barring her from the graves of her dead children, from the lintel over which she had passed, a happy bride? The worst of it all was that every time he turned his face—the face she had struck away from her-in the wonted way in the wonted place, it seemed good to see it. To think that when a small child she had solemnly stared up and down the pages of the garden story, searching for the curse in the pronouncement, "Thy the curse in the pronouncement, desire shall be to thy husband!"

Her desire was to him, though he talked on in that even, emotionless voice to Billy for an hour—less, more, she was not counting time—while she pressed her thrilling body closer to the sill, her face against the vines, sending her very breath as a silent summons into the room—but he did not mention her name. "Your mother did this, said this, was this—"how did the words keep from slipping out, in such surroundings? Did not a woman, on the whole, deserve this much from the father of her child?

"Yes, I know how to cook," he answered Billy's question, and did not say who taught him. "Yes, son, it is a cunning little cupboard," and did not say who had built it. Neither God nor man had decreed in that garden story, "Thy desire shall be to thy wife."

Slowly, as she listened, with the chill weight of the night-dews dragging at her heart through the medium of her garments, Cara Melville bowed herself on the sill—almost into the room, with safety, for the lamp, manfilled, had gone out—and surrendered herself to the still eloquence of the inevitable. One cannot live so many years as she, even living far more foolishly, without having certain hard bits of logic bruised into one's heart. In this man's life she had become a dead issue, through his own fault and wish, as well as hers. Had it been only hers, she could have done something; had he wished his pardon, she could have asked for hers. One can forgive people for doing things; one cannot forgive for being the people who do them. She had no doubt, knowing his character in all its intricacies as she did, that if she appeared to him this moment as a suppliant he would take her back. But back to what? She had run away once from all he had left to offer her. Let what is broken, so remain, Cara; the mill never grinds again with the water that has passed; times change, and we with them. Oh, there are a thousand proverbs, but not one of them to heal a woman's breaking heart!

If he should come to the doorway—near which he must feel her presence; why, a deaf man could hear her heart beating against the house—and once call "Cara!" or even speak of her to their child, the whole face of the facts would, of course, alter. She pressed patiently to the window-frame, waiting to hear if he would. Another hour or æon passed between talk and silence, until the drowsy Billy was sent clattering up the stairs to bed; and then, at last, he did come

to the doorway, for the master's last survey before closing for the night.

Cara's breath stopped. Now was her moment, her opportune moment. Any sensible human being—even the inexperienced Miss Armitage, even the light, yet hard-headed Rose Riterwould have told her that not to speak now, when fate had flung the pair into each other's path with such obvious intention, would be suicidal. people usually do suicidal things, pricked nervously on by the very consciousness of their folly, a consciousness which would make the unpardonable sin, were its character known, more common among us than petty larceny.

William Melville looked fixedly ahead of him over the dark billows of grass. One glance to his left and he could not have helped but see a woman's motionless figure crouched up against the That glance must decide it -she would not ask that he should call her name, for, after all, the night was dark and she was far from home, and her desire wailed out to him. Instead, he looked to the right; then, without a word of soliloquy or a sigh, he went inside and closed the doorbarred it, she hearing him. For him. perhaps, it was not the suicidal thing.

After all, it had not been so many hours, even counting the long walk back to the station in the darkness —she was too unhappy to be afraid for when she reached the waiting-room with its big clock she found the night express due in a few minutes. had spent very nearly the last of her money and had traveled from New York to Colorado, to stay over between trains. As she traveled from Colorado to New York, she tried for a while to form plans of campaign against the frowning future; but, at last, despair seized upon her. The world—God, if He were God at all must take care of a woman so wretched, so tragically checkmated in all efforts, so bound to do things suicidal.

It was not until the cabman, on her arrival in the huge New York station,

whirring with noise, asked, "Where to?" as she paused with her foot on the step, that she decided anything. Then she gave him a house number with the utmost composure.

"Folks ain't home, I guess," he said, as he helped her to alight, peering over his shoulder at the shrouded windows.

"Is Mr. Melville in?" demanded Cara, sharply, of the slatternly-dressed maid who opened the door. She had never seen Cara before. "No one met me at the station. Has the baggage I sent ahead been delivered?"

"Ma'am?" stammered the girl.
"Call the man-servant, please, to
help the cabman with the trunk," continued Cara, imperiously. "Is Mr.

Melville here or at the office? I sent

my telegram there."

"Mr. Melville is in Colorado, with Mr. Billy. He's been there some time, and will be there some time. If ye telegrafted to the office he wouldn't get it."

Cara looked startled. "Oh, well," as though recovering herself, "I will stay until he returns. Where is the man-servant? Surely, you are not the only person in the house?"

The girl reddened. "The—the butler's on his vacation, ma'am," she

quavered.

Cara looked her up and down. "That seems strange," she remarked, "in a house like this, with so many valuable things in it. I shall mention it when I write to Mr. Melville."

"He'll be back by the time the master is," said the damsel, palpitating. "Did ye come to stay, ma'am? What name, could I ask?"

"Mrs. Melville," said Cara. How natural it sounded here! She was safely in the hallway by this time.

Mary Reilly gazed at her suspiciously. "There ain't any Mrs. Melville," she said.

Cara laughed. "You have not been here long," she said—a perfectly safe statement in New York. "Did you never hear them speak of Mrs. Charlemagne Melville?" Small blame to her if she had not. "You can telegraph to Mr. Melville, if you like, to identify

me. Meantime, please get me a cup of tea. I have been traveling for hours."

A pitiful, harmless little revenge this might be; but Cara's eyes lighted excitedly as she glanced around at the four walls of the castle she had captured by boldness. This would teach Will Melville to take her old home, which could do him no good, and the graves of her weanling lambs—her mind harked back to that—and keep her out in the damp and the dew, when by calling her name once—Enough of that! Legally, she had still every right here. He himself could only turn her out by meeting her, and that he would not do.

Mary, climbing the stairs with the cup of tea, was filled with forebodings; she determined to send a warning letter to Mr. Melville at Orion Station, Colorado—she wished it came easier to her to hold the pen. She found Cara with her hand on the knob of the room that had been hers.

"Ye can't get in there," the maid said. "He kapes that room locked."

"The key is in the door," returned Cara, and Mary saw that it was. On a worn little silver ring it had long jingled in whatever queer woman's receptacle Cara kept her keys, drawing rust to itself. She slipped in and hurriedly shut the door on Mary's peering eyes, and, it seemed, upon her own, for the room had the darkness of death. Every shutter drawn and dust triumphant, she could feel it smearing her groping fingers; she choked as she drew it into her lungs.

Nothing touched or cared for! The light she let in from a hastily opened shutter showed her the gown she had thrown across the footboard of the bed—nay, the very dent she had made sitting on its side. She deliberately went to the other side and made another dent; she took up the gown—queer, dowdy thing now—and more dust fell from its folds.

A horror like Rip Van Winkle's seized Cara. The dust on the floor, which had wonderfully sifted in through closed windows and doors,

after the manner of dust, had probably not been disturbed save by her own intruding foot. Yes, it had; for across the floor lay a direct path of footmarks—a man's—pointing both ways, mingling confusedly under light accretions of fresh dust. They began at the locked door of the room communicating, which used to be, and perhaps still was, her husband's, and they led over to the dressing-table. Cara picked her way, setting her feet carefully in the same marks. Was it not irony? For a moment—between a past and a future of separation—their feet walked the same path. On the dressing-table, pinned to the cushion, was a slip of paper. What was this? She had left him no note on the The writing on the paper was Will's and consisted merely of a date, "April 29, 1894."

Cara was not likely to forget that date. But to see it on that bit of paper, already yellowing at the edges, moved her strangely. Had it, then, meant anything to Will Melville? Out of her conviction that the day she left him would be to him little different from other days, save for a certain stinging of the cheek, a tingle of hurt pride, had come her leaving. The written line is so very live. In that arbitrary collection of characters, none too legible, the touch of a vanished hand survived. Taken together with the footmarks, it was a shock. It is always a shock to hear a voice, a step, in the house of death. Cara softly closed up the room, went into the library, threw herself on the couch and covered her eyes.

Later in the afternoon she heard Mary Reilly at the telephone, shouting stentorian secrets, in the misplaced confidence of the ignorant, who find it hard to realize that what they say is not as private as what they hear. "O'Ryan Station, yis!" Mary screamed. "Now ye're sure ye'll sind it right on to the telegraft place? Say, 'there's a lady come to stay in the house, that says she's one of the family, name Mrs. Melville. Mebbe she's all right, but I niver heard tell of her

before, and I thought ye ought to Very respectfully, Mary This is lots better than know. Reilly.' doin' your own spellin'," she confided to the operator. "Now, connect me with the police station." Cara listened with half a smile to the message she sent to that centre of suspicion. She just wanted an eye kept on the house, that was all, being as she was the only servant in it, the butler being on a little vacation, though "ye needn't mention it to the master, for he'll be back before they get home. And a strange lady that said she was one of the family, but whom Mr. Melville never told her to expect—" here followed the substance of what she had said in the telegram.

"Perhaps ye'll be writing him that ye're here?" inquired Mary, when she served a solitary dinner. "If ye plaise, don't say anythin' about Martin bein' away. 'Tis his mother died, and the master's that tenderhearted, as ye perhaps know, he'd

be grievin' for Martin.'

The emphasis lay on the word "perhaps." Another half of a smile broke the melancholy of Cara's expression. So the unauthorized absence of a servant, which his colleague dreaded to have reported, was all that forced Mary to believe in Mrs. Charlemagne Melville—nay, even to permit her presence in the house. As it was, Cara, somehow, feared to leave it. It was becoming an old instead of a new experience, this having doors shut in one's face. And Mary, too, feared to leave, though taking some comfort in the fact that no denial of the identity of his guest reached her from Melville. Was there not valuable silver in the safe? might not this odd-mannered, imperious visitor be in league with a band of burglars? In a spirit of mutual distrust the two women moved about the great, lonely house, addressing each other with the lowered, watching eye, the tone of assumed indifference. Cara heard Mary giving her marketing orders over the telephone; she

heard the patrolman's steps more frequently about the house at night than when she had lived there before. She, in turn, scarcely dared go out to post a letter, still less to intrust it to Mary's hands, which was one of her excuses for not writing to Miss Armitage. Whether she had come here in a spirit of retaliation or for a shelter -sometimes she said to herself it was for one, sometimes for the other—for either she was paying in coin of excruciating bitterness. Ghosts lined themselves up against the walls and gibbered at her. The garden, of which once she had been so proud, for its size made it a rare luxury in New York—now she did not dare to set foot in it, or even look at it.

One day something set her wondering why that path to the dressing-table had been made. Only one line was written on the paper—whose yellowness and the rust of the pin that held it were proof that it had been there a long time; yet here were marks of repeated passings to and fro. opened the drawer, full of a tumble of old ribbons and laces—reminiscent of old festivities. It made her sick to see them. On the top lay half a dozen unopened letters addressed to herself in varying handwritings-letters from desultory correspondents, which she saw by the postmarks had come after she had gone and before the whole world knew it. How curious to put them here, as though he had expected her to come back!

She did not open them. She did, however, lift the flap of a long, unaddressed envelope in another corner of the large, untidy drawer. The color left her face suddenly and entirely, in the manner of the day in the car when her boy's jacket had brushed her face. White, shining, and curly as a bunch of shavings, but soft as only God can make a baby's hair, the locks lay in her hand.

"Billy's curls!" she murmured. He had worn them when she left him. So young and helpless was he when she left him! And, after all, Will had remembered that she had kept snip-

pings of the red-brown curls of the other two, and had been sure she would want these also; sure she would come back and want them!

Her shaking fingers touched something else under the mass of oddments -a small, square box, wrapped in what had been jewelers' fine white paper, but now discolored. Portions of the seal crumbled away at her touch. It, too, bore a date—"June 30, 1894." She was not likely to forget that day, either. Even Will had always remembered to come out of his fog of indifference long enough to buy some trinket commemorative of their wedding-day. Other boxes lay near it—why! the whole drawer seemed full of them, but on actual count they resolved themselves to Of varying shapes and sizes, one for each year of her absence, indorsed each with the date of the anniversary, they lay there waiting for her, symbols not only of faith extraordinary, but of the pathetic perversity of human affection, which neglects not to pay tithes like these of mint, anise and cummin, while neglecting weightier matters of the law. Even a stranger could very nearly have wept at the thought of Will had nursed the hope of her return at the same breast with a vicious pride born into the world to prevent it!

Well, she had returned now. Why not open the boxes? Any curiosity as to their contents did not touch The surface woman in her had always loved these little outward adornments; but pain had left very little of the surface. All she cared to do was to stare dumbly at them. They gave their message too late, after she had tried unrighteously to rob him of the child she had unrighteously left to him; after she had broken the silence of six years with words of bitterness; after she had seized his own house from him! What is there base in the quickness of the human heart to be won with gifts? Even the Almighty, we are taught, could think of no better way to reclaim man than by an Unspeakable Gift. For behind the thing given lies the thought. Given, not taken—and she replaced the boxes. Mary, loyally spying at the keyhole, saw her stoop too low to be seen, and naturally never imagined her lying prone on the floor in a sudden rush of grief, with her lips pressed to the marks of her husband's feet. In that one moment things Cara had thought she could never forgive or forget were forgotten—one does not forgive.

When she rose, the dust he had trodden lay grotesquely smeared on her wet cheek, but she did not know it. Very shrunken and old she felt herself as she crept to her desk, unable longer to endure alone this house of ghosts, and wrote an appealing letter to her one unalienated, because unalienable. friend. She had seen by the papers that the Daughters were in busy session in the city; but if Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage were to fail her, the pin that held the bottom of the world in place would suddenly give way.

Mary, at first, demurred at going out to post the letter. Her throat was sore, she said. Perhaps it was, with bellowing over the well-used telephone. It summoned her again after she had reluctantly left the house with the letter, and Cara, wickedly wondering if the police were inquiring after the movements of Mary's jailer-prisoner, answered it. At the voice which reached her over the wire the receiver nearly dropped from her hand.

"Hello! I say again! Is that Mary?"

"Hello!" evasively retorted Cara's trembling voice, which she was sure she herself would not have recognized.

"Is that you, Mary? Everything all right? Nothing happened since I left?" A certain telegraph company was still searching for an "O'Ryan Station," to which should have been delivered a tramp message two weeks ago, but only the telegraph company knew it. "I got back last night, but stopped at a hotel with Mr. Billy,

knowing you would want to fix up the house. I'll be home to dinner at six."

"Oh!" said the other end of the circuit, involuntarily.

"Hey? You're not Mary! Who is it?" with an agitated sharpness.

"It's—it's Cara, Will." The click of the replaced receiver acted as a period. Cara stood with hands pressed tightly on her ears to drown a recall message. He could not, should not answer, "Then I will not come!"

Mary, returning from her flying trip to the post-box, was stunned to find her guest in the kitchen, wearing one of her—Mary's—white aprons, and with cheeks flushed from poking at her—Mary's—fire. "I've ordered a chicken for to-night, Mary," she said, breathlessly. "Mr. Melville will be home to dinner, and I am going to cook it myself for him—an old-fashioned chicken-pie, such as he loves. You can go out, if you like."

"The divle I'll go out!" muttered Mary, with simple eloquence and heartfelt sincerity, backing into the butler's pantry. This was the stran-

gest proceeding of all.

"Have you sent for Martin?" inquired Cara, feeling an impulse to laugh—no, to break into a gale; to sing, dance, whirl dervish-like about the kitchen.

This brought Mary to a state of anxious civility—this, and the reflection that the lady did not seem exactly afraid of the master's return. The lady was too happy to make the handmaiden unhappy, however. They grew to be friends—fast, warm, almost hilarious friends—in that hour and a half of excited rushing about the kitchen, Cara with her hands deep in dough, which she would not let the other woman touch.

"Take off those stuffed olives," she commanded. "He hates the peppers. Get the other kind. Why do you talk about an egg for clearing the coffee? He likes it made the French way. It is time I—" she checked herself. "No, indeed, I will make it, myself. Oh, I, forgot—set another place; no, I'll set it. A lady is coming, too."

Her heart had formed a habit of reverence at the thought of Miss Armitage. She scarcely minded the thought of the lady's presence to-night. The whole world might come, if only Will would come!

The pie, the work of her scarcely responsible hands, approached accomplishment in the oven. To the end of her days she never knew exactly what she had put in it. The table was set and waiting for the master. Cara also waited in the library, neither she nor the contagiously excited Mary noting that she still wore the white apron. But the library clock was so fast that, to avoid unnecessary apprehension, she went and waited in the reception-room. Here, too, the clock was outrageously fastit ticked fifteen, twenty, even thirty minutes after six, with a fiendish rapidity that yet could not keep up with the pulsations of her own heart, which, at a quarter to seven, began to beat up around her ears—we all know the sensation. Angrily, she crossed to a room where there was no clock, to undergo another wretched half-hour of waiting. Had he so waited for her, year by year, until tired of it?

"It's a crisp, ma'am," said the disappointed Mary, suddenly materializing in the doorway. "I've took it out of the oven. And the olives is swimmin' away in the melted ice. It's long after seven. D'ye think he'll come?"

Cara eyed her. "No," she said, in a strange voice, "I do not think he will." Then, before the servant, she threw her apron over her head, following the mysterious elemental impulse of stricken womankind, and began to rock herself back and forth, "keening" like any Mary or her foremothers. "He will not come!" she wailed. "Mary, go away, for he will not come!"

Almost antiphonally the always startling sound of an electric doorbell smote their ears. "Ye're wrong, thin!" shrieked Mary, who understood more with each moment and flung herself down-stairs. But Cara was quicker to open the door to a drive of

rain and a little wet wisp of a woman, who enveloped her in her dripping

"I would not let him in, Cara!" she gasped, triumphant. "Don't have the slightest fear, dear child. It took me half an hour on the step, both of us drenched in the rain, to convince him that I wouldn't. 'It may be your house,' I said, 'but Cara has made it her last refuge and you shall not come in and make her miserable. She has told me she hates you and will not wish to see you. On that point I am firm.' I watched him carefully out of sight, Cara!"

XII

HALF the world does not know how it mortally offends the other half, and awaits the Judgment Day in an appalling purity of conscience. Melville's sense of any loss was at first swallowed up in amazement of anger, unpierced by any ray of light on a subject for whose explanation unutterable dolts of friends came to him in malignant droves. He had loved Cara "all right," as she had said of him. He had provided well for her and her child. So well had he loved and provided, so immaculately acted, that it must surely be to-day, or at latest to-morrow, that she would be coming back to offer excuses, which must be valid to have been so tremendously operative. Therefore, he went out and bought the wedding-present when the anniversaries came around. So immaculately had he acted, so well provided and loved, that only the most criminally sentimental could expect him to make overtures for her return.

Then she had gone on the stage. A man's wife may parade herself in social publicity before thousands, without its stinging as does her appearance before hundreds who pay her for it. It stings even when the man does not love her. The sense of ownership is strong as death and cruel as the grave. Only the records of the Searcher of Hearts could reveal whether at this period William

Melville loved his wife, either in his own way or any other way.

He remained stunned, for, to quote again from Cara in her own defense, he "felt things, all right." It was no great awakening when he began to give Billy more attention than before. It was not because he felt that he had halfneglected the boy. It was simply because the boy seemed to him more attractive than before. Most minds work in that way. Then, one day, came to him a most singular old lady and she stunned him afresh, just as he was recovering from the other blow.

"Everything I do is laid to me." wept the ill-used little girl in the tale, without an idea that the whole world travaileth and groaneth together in the pain of the same cry. Will Melville echoed it more or less faintly, with more or less sincerity, until another cry echoed more loudly, sending, scourging him more than half across America to escape it or to come face to face with her who uttered it—whose retreating form in the flying cab he could not have pursued had he wished. And, again, unless the Searcher of Hearts troubles His books with tragic entries of the agonies, follies, approaches, withdrawals, repentances of good as well as of evil, in the man-andwoman relation of millions of bubbles like us, no one could say what Melville wished.

"You cold and selfish man!"

It was one thing to hear Cara quoted as saying it; another to hear her say it when he was looking in her eyes, for the first time in years, waiting for some word of relenting. It rang in his ears all the way to Colorado; it was to Colorado instead of somewhere else because the weeping Billy had declared his mother was "going to the ranch." And one night, tired of waiting to hear her come up and knock at the door, he had gone out to the doorstep and looked wistfully out on the road, and would have been so glad to see her coming from afar off!

"You cold and selfish man!" "It's Cara, Will!" These were the two sentences, ridiculously telescoped into each

other, like trains run from opposite starting-points on the same road. They were the only two sentences he had received from her since she had left him, and now they summoned him to discover which of the two she The old lady had said things, repeated things-which made him wonder, after all, whether Cara did hate But on the very threshold of his own house this old woman had again met him and stopped him, with arms passionately outstretched, and told him, with the greatest circumstantiality and plainness, that Cara diđ.

"It is of no use," Miss Armitage had declared, with the utmost positiveness. "You may have the legal right to come and drive her out—"

"But, my dear madam, I would not drive her out!"

"What would you do?" she had inquired, unanswerably.

"Ask her to—stay," he blurted out, desperately. She repeated that to Cara a day or two after, triumphantly adding the answer she gave him:

"'I will not permit her to be so annoyed. Her heart is broken, and she sent for me. I am an old friend of Cara's. It is of no use to talk."

From a point out of sight to Miss Armitage's forward-poised eyes, that yet wore glasses for near-sightedness, he long watched the windows of Cara's house, as she had watched the lighting in Colorado of his, until—"Move on!" said a gruff, suspicious voice at his elbow—a patrolman's.

Yet, he moved not only on but back, the next night and yet the next, still watching and still watched, drawn by the thousand cords of the most inexplicably tenacious of human relations, so easy to strain, so hard to break. Each night he stayed longer.

The fourth night he made up his mind again to try the house. Surely, the old lady slept sometimes. He waited for the lights to twinkle out; but one, which he settled on as hers, stayed stubbornly awake. One—two o'clock passed before the light was suddenly extinguished. He waited for a few

moments, then sprang up the steps, took out his latchkey before he remembered he must ring the bell, and—had the door surprisingly opened in his face by a woman—a woman with a haggard face, a small bag in one thin, trembling hand, a smaller purse in the other. It was Cara, who had always had the habit of leaving houses when they were no longer tolerable. She had left a remorseful note for the deserted guest, sleeping in peaceful unconsciousness in the third story.

The recognition was instant.

"We seem to meet on doorsteps," he said, in a low voice.

She fell, rather than bent, toward him, all the strength gone out of limb and heart and hate.

And in the very moment a dark shape, her pursuing fate that took Proteus forms, rose to forbid. was only the familiar, barrel-outlined figure in the brass-buttoned coat and helmet of the law, which she had watched with a morbid, homesick terror from the window; but it lunged forward, with a haste which meant suspicion, from a bank of shadow on the curb, and was making for the steps as though to halt them. There was no time for saying anything pleading, or reproachful, or magnanimous, or dramatic; no time for fumbling among piteous precedents as to which had the better right to fling open that door and invite the other in. It was Cara who clutched her husband's arm in a paroxysm of fear and pulled him in through the doorway.

"Quick!" she said, wildly. "Come in, oh, come in!" It seemed scarcely possible that the door closed with noisy security on them both, and that they were standing together on its right side, at last face to face with each other—and with an immense awkwardness, the product of crude emotion awed by its own

strength.

"Don't tremble so," Melville—as if he himself were not trembling—said in the low voice which was all he had. "What could he do to us?"

"Arrest me," whispered Cara. "He

thinks I am a thief. He has been watching me. And there would have been publicity—" she shuddered, she who had had enough of publicity— "and—a patrol-wagon, perhaps, and a night in a cell." She continued to tremble at the thought of it.

"Well, I would have been in it, too. He has been watching me very

suspiciously."

"But it wouldn't even have been the same cell," she said, involuntarily.

Her husband took a step forward. "Would you wish it to be?" he

breathed.

She did not answer. With the realization that he was actually there, that he was speaking to her, not coldly or selfishly, that he seemed interested in her wishes, rose the

wayward instinct of fencing.

She, who a moment since could have thrown herself on the stone step at his feet for letting her hear his voice, its every familiar accent tied to some long-stilled heart-string, now felt a rallying reaction of pride, a confused determination that he should not take her back for pity. It would have been all so different if that tentative half-embrace on the doorstep could have been finished. Instead, "What a gloom!" she said, nervously, and reached overhead to the chandelier in the dusky hall.

"Let me," he said. Their fingers met at the key and came down together, shyly, stiffly touching. In the new illumination they stood, absurdly at arm's length, yet woodenly holding hands like the stupidest of country lovers, lapped in a wave of shyness which grew each moment less painful and more delicious. With the pressure of the other's hand that increased, nay, clung, more with every instant, each felt the other's life quietly returning into his own. Will Melville tried to speak, knowing there had been too few words in the past. But the wanness of her cheeks, the dark pathos of her eyes, choked him with their mute speech of what might have been the harrying of the

wolf of want itself, for all he had helped. He hid his face from it against hers, fairly cold with weeping.

"Cara!" he murmured, "we would want it to be the same cell, would

we not?"

"Oh, yes," she said; "oh, yes, yes!" throwing from her, as quickly as she had formed it, the impulse to hedge with him as with Fanning and his kind, and abandoning herself to his embrace. "It hurt me most!" she whispered. "I struck your face-" as if he did not know it! "It was a dreadful thing.

"Never mind," contritely; "women forgive men more than that every

"And I tried to steal Billy. Oh, They both started at his Billy!" "Where is Billy?" she dename. manded.

"Still at the hotel, no doubt crying for his father, poor chap!"

"Only for his father?" wincing.

There was no reply.

"Does he never cry for me?" asked

Cara, entreatingly.
"At the first—" began her husband, slowly. "Why, Cara! oh, my girl, don't, don't!" For the sobs that began to shake her body, the tears that began to splash on her heaving breast and on the hands locked closely together, were to the ordinary easy grief of the emotional woman as some seismic convulsion of a writhing continent to a tiny ebullient well.

"Oh, he—Mary—they were right," she wept, incoherently. The more she strove for self-control the more she gasped, the more the tears streamed. "I am a thief! I robbed

Billy—you—myself."

They clung together—he, with no trace about him now of a stone, trying to stop the torrent of her tears, both trying to outdo each other in repentances, self - accusations. are both so undemonstrative," Cara whispered, brokenly. Yet they did not seem so.

"I wanted you all along," he insisted.

"We won't say much about that," said Cara, a little quickly. "It would be like my saying I was sorry all along. I must learn wool-broking," she added, later, with a touch of the long-eclipsed quality of Cara-Melvillity.

"I don't know but you must, to hold down the business while I go to dancing-school." And then they both laughed aloud with tremulous amuse-

ment at the mere idea of it.

A quick, squirrel-like patter sounded over their heads, on the landing, two tiers above. "Cara!" came a voice down the stairway, whose unwonted illumination might well bewilder newlyawakened eyes. "Is it possible you are there, dearest child?"

"Yes, Miss Helena!"

"And," wonderingly, "you are all

right?"

Cara looked at her husband. Impulsively both bent forward, and they kissed. The moment had almost the freshness and the dazzlement of first love. Each flashed into the other's eyes the adoring, self-abasing, apprehensive tenderness, the passionate humility, of the forgiven penitent prostrate at the altar.

"Oh, I am very, very all right!" Cara called up the staircase, joyously.

"Oh, very well, dear. I had an

absurd, nervous idea that I heard a man's voice."

"So you did!" shouted the man. "Come down, Miss Armitage. How glad she will be!" he added. "Do you know, I pinned my hopes to her? not realizing that she was so unyielding in her friendships. When she first came I hoped—as I did with them all, Cara—that you had sent her. I let Billy go to her only because I thought it might somehow bring some word from you."

But Miss Armitage was rather less glad than scandalized, partly at being called into the presence of a man in her pin-striped flannel gown, partly at the turn of affairs themselves.

"I would not dream of interfering, Cara, dear," she said, withdrawing the gown to a shaded corner of the hall. "I wish only your happiness. But I had thought you were peculiarly unsuited to each other. I did everything I could think of," almost dejectedly, "to keep this from happening."

"Don't reproach yourself," said Melville, heartily. "You very nearly succeeded. Come out, Miss Armitage, and let me hug you. Cara has not a

friend like you in the world!"

But the alarmed upward scamper of a pair of straw-slippered feet—and the beating of their own hearts—was all the sound they heard.



NOT THAT VARIETY

SALLY GAY—Mercy sakes! Miss Linger Long engaged to Jack Whoopler? Why, she told me only yesterday that she wouldn't marry the best man on earth!

DOLLY SWIFT-She isn't going to.



A CONCLUSION

DE STYLE—There were eight hundred killed in the Philippines. Gunbusta—I didn't know they had automobiles out there.



THE HYPHENATED AMERICAN

A WONDERFUL power has the hyphen small, Like a chain-shot fired at the social wall; For nothing and nothing make all-in-all, When you join the two with a hyphen.

You don't need money, you don't need sense, To be a person of consequence; You go to the top of the tallest fence If you spell your name with a hyphen.

Now Brown is a man you may neglect, And Jones is held in no more respect; But Brown-Jones stands among the elect, For he spells his name with a hyphen.

And when he takes as his lawful mate Miss Robinson-Smith, it is safe to state That the Robinson-Smith-Brown-Joneses are great, In a double degree of hyphen.

Oh, the one-em dash hath a virtue bold More potent than pedigree or gold For making the newest of families old— The all-ennobling hyphen!

JAMES JEFFREY ROCHE.



A FINE PROSPECT

FIRST SUMMER GIRL—Does it make you think what might be to look at the man in the moon?

SECOND SUMMER GIRL—Yes, coupled with the fact that there's a ring around the moon.



NATURALLY

CORA—That chorus girl seemed rather embarrassed while in bathing.

MERRITT—You see, she's not accustomed to wearing such a scanty costume.



ENIUS often dwindles to an immense capacity for taking gains.

THE SHINING GLOSS

By Gertrude Lynch

THE is so beautiful that I cannot tell whether I adore her or hate her."

This was the conversational glove thrown into the arena by Mrs. Campan, as she leaned forward and helped

herself to a salted nut.

"Well, I don't mind saying," was Mrs. Byrd's comment, "that my feelings have changed; at one time they were those of a connaisseur who looks at a celebrated masterpiece in silent and respectful awe, and they would have remained so forever, but, in an unguarded moment, she gave one glance at my Edward and he has never been the same man since.'

Mrs. Byrd bowed, in response to her hostess's pantomime, and passed her

cup for the third time.

I think she is rather self-conscious." commented Miss Carey, a spinster of a certain age. The tone was slightly interrogative.

"Not a bit," said the hostess; "not a bit! If I were asked at this moment to name the woman of my acquaintance who worries the least about looks. I should say, without hesitation, Clare Porter."

Mrs. Weymouth passed the sugar to her right-hand neighbor, then went on: "Why should she? It is only the beauty which is uncertain that is self-absorbed. You don't suppose if the Venus of Milo came to life she would wonder if her hat were becoming, or if she were the belle, par excellence, on any special occasion. Of course not: she would know. Perfection is never thus worried; if it were, it would not be perfection. Clare Porter. I would wager, spends

less thought and time on her appearance than any one here."

Mrs. Vail was fond of epigrams not fond enough, however, to keep them to herself.

"Perfect knowledge casteth out egotism, you mean." She refreshed herself with a champagne wafer.

"It is wonderful how she keeps her youth," sighed Maud Fleming, a débutante and toast of ten years ago.

"Beauty," said Mrs. Vail, senten-

tiously, "has no age."
Mrs. Hastings swept a clear place for her elbow on the tiny tea-table. "I don't agree with you at all—not at all."

Mrs. Hastings was the president of a woman's club; her intonations were those of one used to quelling incipient

insubordination.

"Clare Porter is, I believe, generally admitted to be a beautiful woman; she is not my style—" this with a deprecatory glance—"but far be it from me to oppose public opinion on that point. The minority are not always wrong, but they might just as well be for any good it does them to be right. However, I shall permit myself to say that, if you think Clare Porter doesn't know she is beautiful, doesn't think about it all the time and doesn't dream about it nights, you are talking nonsense. I believe, if any one should dare as much as to hint to her that she was growing old, it would almost kill her."

"You know her-well?" It was

Mrs. Weymouth who asked.

"Well? I should say so; we were children together." Mrs. Hastings had forgotten, apparently, that they were children of a widely different growth. "She was a pretty child, a pretty girl, and now she is a pretty woman pretty, nothing more, according to my idea. She has been surrounded by an atmosphere of adoration from the time she could talk. It is the fashion to extol her looks. Take this half-hour, for example; here we are, spending our few minutes in a futile discussion of the supremely important question as to whether Clare Porter thinks she is beautiful. If she goes to a dinner, people forget to converse while they look at her; if she appears at a reception, other women might as well go home. I should not be surprised if societies were formed to discuss which is the most becoming color she can wear; in fact, not so very long ago, I saw two women get red and angry because one thought Clare more stunning in rose and the other inclined to heliotrope."

Mrs. Campan looked analytical. "So you think that her apparent indifference is assumed; that at heart she is vain and selfish?"

"Well," Mrs. Hastings said, after a moment, "of course, that is putting it rather harshly. 'Vain and selfish'-I should not like to apply those adjectives; but I repeat what I said before, that I think it would break her heart to be told by any one that she was not holding her own with Father Time."

"Nonsense!" and Mrs. Byrd took up the ball; "Clare Porter wouldn't care a rap. I think the novelty of it would amuse her. She must be deadly tired of being told she is beautiful; think of the horrible ennui of having every human being, from the time one can understand, telling one how lovely one is. Of course, she would regret it if she were pock-marked or hurt in an accident, but she is only human in that—plain as I am, I should hate to lose what few good looks I have; so should we all. No; I believe, as Mrs. Weymouth says, that there is not one of us here who is not vainer of her special attraction, hair, teeth, complexion, figure—whatever it may be—than Clare is of her whole splendid self."

Mrs. Hastings was obstinate. She believed in her own infallibility, but, too, she wanted to convince others.

"What do you think?" she questioned of Mark Vane, the one man in

the party.

He had been listening with an inscrutable expression on his face. could not think of acting as a committee of arbitration in such a delicate matter."

"But you have an opinion, at least,"

said Mrs. Hastings, bluntly.

"Yes, I have an opinion," he ventured, with slight hesitation.

"And it is— —?"

"That with a little feminine tergiversation you can prove yourselves right or wrong."

" How?"

The question came from as many different directions as the wind in a gale.

"Oh, in a hundred ways."

"And one of them is——?"

He clicked his teaspoon against the saucer while he gave himself a moment's time.

"Well, supposing the next time you meet, instead of rushing toward her with all sorts of sugared flatteries on your lips, you treat her to a little feminine criticism—not so much that it will be marked, something tactful and suggestive rather than pronounced. You know the way your sex has. You don't say, 'What a bad hat!' but, 'Have you changed your milliner, Not, 'You weren't looking well at Mrs. Given's soirée,' 'Were you at Mrs. Given's? yes, so you were; I had forgottenso you were. Wasn't Miss Dey a dream?' Oh, you all know! idea of a mere man like myself assuming the importance of a teacher to post-graduates!"

"It would be rather amusing," said Mrs. Byrd, as she sat forward in her chair, "just, of course, as a study of character—the modern failing.

"Yes," said Mrs. Campan, "we

must impale our dearest ones on the pin of our researches. Truth at any cost, if your friend pays for the treat."

Mrs. Vail had a New England conscience, which obtruded itself at the most undesirable times. "Would it

be quite right to her?"

Mrs. Byrd nodded, with a twinkle in her eyes. "It would be a good joke, and Clare is really such a dear she will enjoy it the most of any of us when we tell her. Of course, we will tell her?" she asked, looking straight at Mrs. Hastings.

"Of course," that lady answered, "but she won't think it a joke." Mrs. Hastings was waving her colors frantically, now that she saw help in

the offing.

Mrs. Campan suddenly remembered a later engagement. She rose and shook out her chiffons. "This sounds like a plot, doesn't it? I hope I sha'n't forget; I am so used to telling Clare that she looks like an angel that I believe my tongue says it unconsciously. I'll practice when I get home. 'Clare, my dear child, do bant—that waist-line is just a little—''"

They all laughed, but not as one laughs at novelty.

Mrs. Campan turned at the door. "Do the schemers report progress?"

Mrs. Weymouth checked the rising tumult of departure. "Come in next Thursday—no, a week from Thursday. I'll ask her to meet us then; we'll tell her the whole thing."

"Tell her what?" asked Mrs. Vail; "that we didn't know whether she

was vain or not?"

"Oh, no; just that we had a little curiosity to see how she would stand the delicate amenities that other women suffer from all their lives. Wasn't that the idea, Mr. Vane?"

Mr. Vane was standing erect and expressionless. "Perfectly, as I un-

derstand it."

"Clare will enjoy it, you may be sure," was Mrs. Byrd's last shot. "She's no fool, if she is beautiful."

Clare Porter had suffered to the

extreme from all those sorrows that fall to the lot of exceptionally beautiful women. In her girlhood she had enjoyed the sensation of knowing that she was the focus of admiration in whatever circle she moved. had loved the adulation of the mob, no less than the creed that her most heinous errors against sense and judgment would be regarded leniently by the mere force of Greek classicism and properly rounded curves. lived thoughtlessly, content with the surface, neither fearing nor heeding the depth, until the years of womanhood, with their fruition of promise, when she was forced to the knowledge of the terrible penalty that nature exacts for any exception from its normal rule.

"One must suffer," says the French proverb, "in order to be beautiful." After she had passed her twenty-fifth year, Clare Porter would have expressed it, "One must suffer if one is beautiful." The pin-pricks of envy, hatred and uncharitableness were directed toward her, and it is only in the Litany that these words are innocuous.

The training of a varied social experience gave her power to conceal these hurts, as well as the sensitiveness of a highly strung temperament and the craving for affection for herself—the inner, not the outer woman.

In her school and college days she was the idol of enthusiastic companions, who enshrined and then worshiped her with all the superabundant vitality of their untrained emotions. The friendships of later years were more reserved, although sometimes their expression lated the earlier ones. In these, admiration of her personal charm was the distinctive element, but unlike their childish predecessors they were tempered by a fear of her power. Every woman looked at her with distrust, if not of the present, at least of the future, and those who were most fervid in their declarations of affection unknowingly made her feel that she was on probation and

that a smile or challenge in the wrong direction might necessitate an unweaving of the web of intimacy.

She was susceptible to "atmospheres" and was immediately aware of hostility, no matter how cleverly concealed. The silence, which others deemed a tribute to her loveliness, was, she knew with unfailing intuition, often a mixture of suspicion and distrust, a struggle between jealousy and justice, tempered, but never dominated, by lukewarm sentiments.

There was no dramatic crisis, but, realizing little by little her inability to inspire friendship as she dreamed it, she accepted its poor substitutes without complaint, gave and took in a half-superficial way, and met advances with an unmoved exterior, which gave her critics opportunity to call her cold and heartless, without contradiction from any one who had the touchstone of truth to prove these statements false.

Men repelled her, although until her understanding with them reached the point of confessions, she held them by the mere force of beauty and social prestige. Afterward, went away, or stayed, cursing her indifference—the spoiled attitude, as they termed it, of the professional beauty. Always they made her feel the inconsequence of what she was, the consequence of what she seemed: always she felt them studying the external, less their fault, perhaps, than that of nature, which had made it so prominent. Men of the world, the men she knew, believed her incapable of faith because they knew her temptations; they fed her vanity unceasingly, but left her mind and soul to starve. One by one, as she found them wanting, she cast them aside and so gained the reputation of coquetry.

There had been ambitious days, too; days when she felt that she could do, as well as be. Everything worked toward her discouragement. No matter what she essayed, her personal power outweighed effort. She

gave proof of ability in certain artistic ways which, if accomplished by a plainer woman, might have gained the market value of praise from a critical public, but, because of her greater gifts, neither technique nor promise was noticed. Thus, wearied at length by the indifference which kills all but the sturdy plant of genius, her talent, mediocre, it may be, which might at least have proved a solace, followed the way of friendship and love.

So she accepted the world's dictum and nature's questionable favor. She was to herself at length what she had always been to others, the beautiful Clare Porter—merely that. In the early days of self-analysis she had envied the plainer woman who, by the trick of an upturned nose, a score of freckles, a stocky figure, could win friendship, love or success, without handicap; later, she treasured her appearance as one treasures that which is saved from a wreck.

One man gained a foothold in her life. There was no affinity of temperament; at first she disliked, then she became simply indifferent. She read him truly. Her beauty was the sole provocation. She was to him like a gem whose value is enhanced by a difficulty in possession. He wished her to sit at his table, he wished other men to envy him; he wished her with her power to help him toward the pinnacle of social eminence.

He never flaunted his attentions before a watchful world; only he and she knew that he was working toward a certain end, and that nothing but her marriage to another could prevent his ultimate success. sionally he would write her what he could not say, a letter full of the cleverness which his legal experience made easy. Reading, she felt like a butterfly impaled on a pin and struggling with futile effort. In the beginning she had answered his letters; lately she had torn them up, but she had never been able to tear them unread, a fact that showed his power.

Occasionally, discouragement pursued her. Why not marry him? As he said, she must marry some time, and with him she would be free, understood in part, at least.

This man was Mark Vane.

He smiled lightly, as he ran down the steps of Mrs. Weymouth's house and walked toward the club. He would dine there and write the letter to Clare that the afternoon's chat had suggested. It was his policy to leave no stone unturned to gain his end. His patience was unwearying, and those who wondered at his legal success never dreamed of the tireless effort that had led to its accomplishment. While others slept he had toiled upward in the night, and the numbers of his fellows hid from them the secret, which they attributed to chance and fortuitous circumstance.

That this letter, the outcome of feminine controversy, could effect aught but the addition of a link in the chain he was welding he did not dream.

No human being's mind is an open book to another, but there are pages for some, chapters for others. most acute have presentiments of the last word before it is written. knew many of her disillusions, some of her uncertainties, all of her weak-Only the fact of her hunger for affection, the power of tremendous sacrifice for one she loved, her delicacy of soul were hid, for these were beyond his understanding. Like others, he suspected that her indifference to his sex was prompted by an ambition which exacted the superlative; that she would only give herself to a king among men. This creed fed his consummate egotism, for in her final surrender he read an acknowledgment of his worth.

He watched her writhe on the point of his wit and acuteness. He noticed that the words of his letters, apparently ignored, had in reality sunk deep into her soul. Little by little he felt his influence grow, in an occasional following of a suggestion, in a turning to him in moments of per-

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plexity, in the acceptance, without protest, of his presence where he could be of use to her, in the quiet satisfaction she showed at his lack of exaction.

She let the pages fall from her hand and gazed thoughtfully into the mir-She was en négligée and her hair was disordered. She put her elbow on the dressing-table and her chin in her palm while she looked at the reflected face, carefully, scrutinizingly. Was what he intimated in his letter true? Was her beauty fading? the one treasure that had been allowed her already playing her false? He had never flattered her. His few words of praise had been bestowed in moments of superlative worth; his criticism, equally chary, had been equally effective.

Had others, besides him, noticed and refrained from speaking? Was the praise of friends but habit hiding from her the truth? What was the quotation he had entangled in the clever meshes of his letter?

Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good; A shining gloss which vadeth suddenly.

It had indeed proved but a vain and doubtful good to her—but that it should fade suddenly and leave her nothing else!

She picked up the letter and read sentences here and there. It was not the first time that under the velvet phrase she had detected the iron pur-How well he knew her! so well that she was frightened. Nothing he could say would be so effective as this fear he had placed before her, for all time, of losing that which had raised her above the commonplace, brought prestige and power. might live on the memory of past achievement, the actress, the singer, the writer could retain their laurels to the end; the beauty alone loses all when beauty fades.

Was there nothing left, as he implied, but to guard against the sure coming of that day, which was approaching on fleet feet; nothing to be

hoped for but to place on his shoulders the burden of her coming disaster?

She lost herself in psychologic reasoning. All the contradiction of uncertainty swept through her mind and left its currents tangled. Suddenly, she tore his letter from corner to corner and threw it from her, with a passionate gesture. He was a prophet, but like the usual prophet he had told the truth and mistaken the time of its fulfilment. The misfortune of which he spoke might come, but it had not come as yet. Another glance at the mirror reassured her. paleness caused by the study of the letter's meaning had left her face; a flush illumined it, her eyes were big and bright, her blond hair an aureole of splendor.

Yet, as she turned away from a last look at the perfect lines of her perfect figure, quick disbelief overpowered conviction. What woman's mirror ever told the truth? Cleverly beveled, the light that reaches it tempered with laces and color effects, the story it relates has little to do with that told by the merciless, untempered sun and shade of less-guarded places. How often she had seen women turn away from its falsity with satisfied smiles, unnoting the marks of time and care so plainly visible to other eyes!

She tried to dismiss the subject with trivial memories, and hummed a tune lightly as she was driven to an afternoon reception; but, eating into the placidity of manner, was the corrosion of distrust and the knowledge that, while to all appearance she was only on her way to a friend's "at home," in reality she was on the road that would lead to the fulfilling of a man's will and the adding to her store of husks one last barren hope.

Mrs. Byrd held her two hands as she said, with commiserating accents, "You are not well?"

"Perfectly," was the answer. Then her lips turned white. It was the first time she ever remembered meeting Mrs. Byrd without receiving a compliment on her beauty or grace, not too finely worded, perhaps, but making amends by its evident sincerity.

They chatted of the nothings of life, but she was conscious that Mrs. Byrd's eyes were more watchful than usual and had in them an unanalyzable expression, one she had never seen there before; and, after her first exclamation, she studiously avoided personal comment.

What a student of the heart was this man, Mark Vane! How well he had prophesied, and with what accuracy! Already it seemed that her friends were commiserating her. She would soon be spoken of as faded, etiolated, one who had been. Possibly he had often heard these criticisms and, instead of forcing the time, he had been kind to her and waited to tell her what others already knew.

But her fear was appeased for the moment; others met and flattered, and the premature dread, emphasized by Mrs. Byrd's ejaculation, passed; or, if it attempted to thrust its hydra-head into the calmness of her mind, it was crushed back into futility.

A few days later she met Mrs. Cam-She had been more than usually careful, of late, in the choice of garments, in the thousand little details that go to make a harmonious whole, in those finishing touches that she had often ignored as being time-wasting and, in her case, unnecessary. This day she had on a gown of peculiar shade, daring in its novelty of color and make. She had always listened with quiet amusement to the decisions of others in regard to the possibilities of certain colors; for herself she admitted no dominion—a bit of chiffon, a ribbon or lace, could make any tint wearable.

Mrs. Campan looked at her with the critical stare which usually preceded approval. "That color, Clare—how did you come to choose it? Odd, isn't it? I can't tell whether I like it or not."

It was a gnat's sting, but it found a sensitive surface.

It was at a woman's club reception that she encountered Mrs. Hastings and stopped for a moment's chat. Already the reporters in the back of the room were listing the guests, among whom was "the beautiful Miss Porter." Mrs. Hastings introduced her to Mrs. Vail as "an old school-friend of mine," and then said, pointing to a girlish member recently admitted to the club's arcanum, "It makes us seem old, Clare, doesn't it, to see a child like that eligible to membership?"

There was a matter of eight years' difference in the ages of the two, but Mrs. Vail showed no surprise at this

disregard of nature's barrier.

"I hear you are looking fagged and worn," commenced Miss Humphrey's note. "Can't you come to us for a week—the quiet of outdoors will rest you."

"Fagged and worn!" That was the way one commenced to grow old and so passed from distinction to

oblivion.

She had not realized before how much she cherished her beauty—that it represented so much to her. All the hopes of her life had been forced to centre on it. At least, if it had not brought her friendship, love or fame, it had compensated in some ways. And now, so soon, the flower of it was passing. "She used to be so beautiful." "You should have seen her in "She used to be so beautiher prime." "Isn't it ghastly the way she has faded?" How frequently she had heard these or similar phrases uttered about other women!

Time had laid its relentless hand upon her and she could not struggle against its weight. She was not old enough for this misfortune, as years go, but she had been prodigal of her gift; she had believed it to be immortal and had wasted it in late hours, in

inner and baffling struggles. She had been a spendthrift in very truth.

The plotters had assembled according to agreement. Mrs. Weymouth had a surprise for them. She opened Clare's letter of regret. "She is to be married quietly to-day, and to whom do you think?'

A dozen names were mentioned.

Mrs. Weymouth shook her head at each in turn.

"Mark Vane."

"Mark Vane!" There was a chorus of astonishment.

When quiet was restored, Mrs. Byrd addressed Mrs. Hastings. "You were right, after all. I admit my mistake. She certainly is very conscious and very vain. I never saw a woman look so hurt as when I told her she was pale—just that. She spoke so sharply I thought my head would drop off."

"I wish you could have seen her when I intimated that her gown wasn't becoming. My maid told me that her maid told her that she gave it to her her maid, you understand—as soon as she got home—Clare got home, I mean, of course," and Mrs. Campan relapsed

into untangled thought.

Miss Humphrey threw up her hands. "I must show you the note she sent me -here it is. I merely said in mine that I heard she was looking tired. You see how indignantly she protests; any one could read between the lines that she is hurt to the core. I wouldn't believe that any woman could be so sensitive about her looks."

"But she is beautiful," asseverated Weymouth; "we must admit Mrs.

that."

"Chacun à son goût," responded Mrs. Hastings, with a school-of-lan-

guage accent.

"The most beautiful creature in the world!" was the accompanying chorus.

WHEN a man first loves he feels unworthy, for no particular reason. he acquires the reason, and forgets to feel unworthy.

HOW TO LIVE IN LUXURY

I HAVE had my own carriage and ridden my fill,
I have gone to three balls in a night;
I have lit my cigar with a ten-dollar bill,
And all when my money was tight.

The carriage was back in my babyhood days,
The balls were my uncle's, it's true;
A board-bill it was from which curled the blue haze—
Which shows what a poor man can do.

McLandburgh Wilson.



WHICH ONE WAS HE?

HELLO, my dear!" he exclaimed, greeting the prettiest girl on the veranda. "I've just come in on the train and I'm delighted to meet you again." I—I'm afraid—" she stammered.

"Why, don't you remember me?" he asked, in surprise. "I met you here last season. You fell in love with me and we were engaged for two weeks."

"Your face does seem familiar," she said, as they seated themselves in a secluded nook, "but I can't just place you."

"I came up here in the hope of meeting you again and renewing our old

ties," he pleaded.

"I can't give you any hope," she returned; "not just yet. You see, my love-making last season was rather disastrous. I was engaged three times. The first one palmed himself off as a count. He raised false hopes in my heart, but I've got over that. The second fooled me on a paste engagement ring. I've forgiven him that, for he was jolly company. But the third—oh, he was a heartless wretch! When he was going away, he told me he had lost his return ticket, and I lent him six dollars and forty cents. I thought he was the soul of honor, but he never sent it to me. I hadn't a cent of pin-money left, and I swore that if I ever met him again he'd have to make good."

J. J. O'CONNELL.



THE OTHER SIDE OF IT

IT is remarkable what exceedingly scrubby oaks are sometimes developed from even the most promising acorns.

ICELANDIC LYRICS

By Bliss Carman

THERE'S not a little boat, sweetheart,
That dances on the tide,
There's not a nodding daisy-head
In all the meadows wide;

In all the warm green orchards,
Where bright birds sing and stray,
There's not a whistling oriole
So glad as I this day!

H

She said, "In all the purple hills, Where dance the lilies blue, Where all day long the springing larks Make fairy-tales come true,

"Where you can lie for hours and watch The unfathomable sky, There's not a breath of all the June That's half so glad as I!"

III

I know how the great and golden sun Will come up out of the sea, Stride in to shore And up to her door, To touch her hand and her hair, With so much more than a man can say, Bidding Yvonne good day.

I know how the great and quiet moon Will come up out of the sea, And climb the hill To her window-sill And enter all silently, And lie on her little cot so white, Kissing Yvonne good night. I know how the great and countless stars Will come up out of the sea,
To keep their guard
By her still dooryard,
Lest the soul of Yvonne should stray
And be lost forever there by the deep,
In the wonderful hills of sleep.

IV

Another day comes up,
Wears over, and goes down;
And it seems an age has passed
In a little seaboard town,

To one who must weary and wait
Till the sun comes round once more,
Before he may tap on the pane
And lift the latch of your door.

V

The moonlight is a garden Upon the mountain side, Wherein your gleaming spirit All lovely and grave-eyed,

Touched with the happy craving That will not be denied, Aforetime used to wander Until it reached my side.

Oh, wild, white forest flower, Rose-love and lily-pride, And stanch of burning beauty Against your lover's side!

VI

The lily said to the rose,
"What will become of our pride
When Yvonne comes down the path?"
And the crimson rose replied,

"Our beauty and pride must wane, Yet shall we endure to stir The fancy of lovers unborn In metaphors of her."

VII

The white water-lilies, they sleep on the lake, Till over the mountain the sun bids them wake.

ICELANDIC LYRICS

At the rose-tinted touch of the long, level ray, Each pure, perfect blossom unfolds to the day.

Each affluent petal outstretched and uncurled To the glory and gladness and shine of the world.

O whiter land-lily, asleep in the dawn, While yet the cool curtain of stars is half drawn,

And all the dark forest is mystic and still, With the great yellow planet aglow on the hill,

Hark, somewhere among the gray beeches a thrush Sends the first thrill of soul to requicken the hush!

With a flutter of eyelids, a sigh soft and deep, An unfolding of rosy warm fingers from sleep,

For one perfect day more to love, gladden and roam, Thy spirit comes back to its flowerlike home.

VIII

I do not long for fame,
Nor triumph, nor trumpets of praise;
I only wish my name
To endure in the coming days,

When men say, musing at times, With smiling speech and slow, "He was a maker of rhymes Yvonne loved long ago!"



FOILED

CRAWFORD—How was it you didn't go away to the country for the S mer?

CRABSHAW—My wife changed her mind about going. CRAWFORD—Why, wouldn't you go without her? CRABSHAW—Yes; that was why I wouldn't go.



THOSE GIRLS

MAE—Grace says her face is her fortune.

ETHEL—Does she? I should call it her misfortune.

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THE SUMMER GIRL

WITH many a man I idly sport
Through Summer's gay commotion.
I hold my court at each resort
At mountain, lake or ocean.
I swim, I row, I hunt, I dance
With every age and station,
The ancient lord, the young divine
Upon a brief vacation.
I chatter, chatter as we row
Upon the brimming river—
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever!

I listen oft on evenings fair
To lover's fond recital,
With here and there a millionaire
And here and there a title;
And now and then a poet-swain
Beside me as we're sailing,
Who sings a sentimental strain
To mandolin's soft wailing.
I lead them on, and then say "No,"
Upon the brimming river—
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever!

I'm quite at home at any sport,
At billiards, golf, croquet,
Bridge, ping-pong and on tennis court;
I'm belle by night or day.
I sketch, I pose, I wear swell clothes,
I talk on book or star,
I sing the very latest songs
And twang the light guitar.
I chatter well of all I know,
Beside the brimming river—
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever!

E. W. CHASE.



HE HASTENS TO EXPLAIN

THE WIFE—I believe that Mrs. Rivers thinks I am a fool. THE HUSBAND—There is evidence of that!

"Of what?"

[&]quot;That she thinks you are a fool, my dear."

THE STORY OF JEES UCK

By Jack London

HERE have been renunciations, and renunciations. But, its essence, renunciation ever the same. And the paradox of it is that men and women forego the dearest thing in the world for something dearer. It was never other-Thus it was when Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. The firstlings and the fat thereof were to him the dearest things in the world; yet he gave them over that he might be on good terms with God. So it was with Abraham when he prepared to offer up his son Isaac on a stone. was very dear to him; but God, in incomprehensible ways, was yet dear-It may be that Abraham feared the Lord. But whether that be true or not, it has since been determined by a few billion people that he loved the Lord and desired to serve him.

And since it has been determined that love is service, and since to renounce is to serve, then Jees Uck, who was merely a woman of a swartskinned breed, loved with a great love. She was unversed in history, having learned to read only the signs of weather and of game; so she had never heard of Abel, or Abraham; nor, having escaped the good sisters at Holy Cross, had she been told the story of Ruth, the Moabitess, who did renounce her very God for the sake of a stranger woman from a strange land. Jees Uck had learned only one way of renouncing, and that was with a club as the dynamic factor, in much the same manner as a dog is made to renounce a stolen marrowbone. Yet, when the time came,

she proved herself capable of rising to the height of the fair-faced royal races and of renouncing in right regal fashion.

So this is the story of Jees Uck, which is also the story of Neil Bonner, and Kitty Bonner, and a couple of Neil Bonner's progeny. Jees Uck was of a swart-skinned breed, it is true, but she was not an Indian; nor was she an Eskimo; nor even an Innuit. Going backward into mouthtradition, there appears the figure of one Skolkz, a Toyaat Indian of the Yukon, who journeyed down in his youth to the Great Delta, where dwell the Innuits and where he forgathered with a woman remembered as Olillie. Now the woman Olillie had been bred from an Eskimo mother by an Innuit man. from Skolkz and Olillie came Halie, who was one-half Toyaat Indian, onequarter Innuit and one-quarter Eskimo. And Halie was the grandmother of Iees Uck.

Now Halie, in whom three stocks had been bastardized, who cherished no prejudice against further admixture, mated with a Russian fur-trader called Shpack, also known in his time as the Big Fat. Shpack is herein classed Russian for lack of a more adequate term; for Shpack's father, a Slavonic convict from the Lower Provinces, had escaped from the quicksilver mines into Northern Siberia, where he knew Zimba, who was a woman of the Deer People and who became the mother of Shpack, who became the grandfather of Jees Uck.

Now had not Shpack been captured

in his boyhood by the Sea People, who fringe the rim of the Arctic Sea with their misery, he would not have become the grandfather of Jees Uck and there would be no story at all. But he was captured by the Sea People, from whom he escaped to Kamchatka, and thence, on a Norwegian whaleship, to the Baltic. Not long after that he turned up in St. Petersburg, and the years were not many when he went drifting east over the same weary road his father had measured with blood and groans a half-century before. But Shpack was a free man, in the employ of the great Russian Fur Company. And in that employ he fared farther and farther east, until he crossed Bering Sea into Russian America; and at Pastolik, which is hard by the Great Delta of the Yukon, became the husband of Halie, who was the grandmother of Jees Uck. Out of this union came the woman-child. Tukesan.

Shpack, under the orders of the company, made a canoe voyage of a few hundred miles up the Yukon to the post of Nulato. With him he took Halie and the babe Tukesan. This was in 1850, and in 1850 it was that the river Indians fell upon Nulato and wiped it from the face of the earth. And that was the end of Shpack and Halie. On that terrible night Tukesan disappeared. To this day the Toyaats aver they had no hand in the trouble; but, be that as it may, the fact none the less remains that the babe Tukesan grew up in their midst.

Tukesan was married successively to two Toyaat brothers, to both of whom she was barren. Because of this, other women shook their heads and no third Toyaat man could be found to dare matrimony with the childless widow. But at this time many hundred miles above, at Fort Yukon, was a man, Spike O'Brien. Fort Yukon was a Hudson Bay Company post, and Spike O'Brien one of the company's servants. He was a good servant, but he achieved an

opinion that the service was bad, and in the course of time vindicated that opinion by deserting. It was a year's journey, by the chain of posts, back to York Factory on Hudson's Bay. Further, being company posts, he knew he could not evade the company's clutches. Nothing remained but to go down the Yukon. It was true no white man had ever gone down the Yukon, and no white man knew whether the Yukon emptied into the Arctic Ocean or Bering Sea; but Spike O'Brien was a Celt, and the promise of danger was a lure he had ever followed.

A few weeks later, somewhat battered, rather famished and about dead with river-fever, he drove the nose of his canoe into the earth bank by the village of the Toyaats and promptly away. While fainted getting his strength back, in the weeks that followed, he looked upon Tukesan and found her good. Like the father of Shpack, who lived to a ripe old age among the Siberian Deer People, Spike O'Brien might have left his aged bones Toyaats. Only, romance with the gripped his heart-strings and would not let him stay. As he had journeyed from York Factory to Fort Yukon, so, first among men, might he journey from Fort Yukon to the sea and win the honor of first man to make the Northwest Passage by land. So he departed down the river, won the honor and was unannaled and unsung. In after years he ran a sailors' boardinghouse in San Francisco, where he became esteemed a most remarkable liar by virtue of the gospel truths he But a child was born to Tukesan, who had been childless. And this child was Jees Uck. Her lineage has been traced at length to show that she was neither Indian, nor Eskimo, nor Innuit, nor much of anything else; also to show what waifs of the generations we are, all of us, and the meanderings of the seed from which we spring.

What with the vagrant blood in her and the heritage compounded of many races, Jees Uck developed a wonderful young beauty. Bizarre, perhaps, it was, and Oriental enough to puzzle any passing ethnologist. A lithe and slender grace characterized her. Beyond a quickened lilt to the imagination, the contribution of the Celt was in no wise apparent. It might possibly have put the warm blood under her skin, which made her face less swart and her body fairer; but that, in turn, might have come from Shpack, the Big Fat, who inherited the color of his Slavonic And, finally, she had great, blazing black eyes—the half-caste eye, round, full-orbed and sensuous, which marks the collision of the dark races with the light. Also, the white blood in her, combined with her knowledge that it was in her, made her, in a way, ambitious. Otherwise, by upbringing and in outlook on life, she was wholly and utterly a Toyaat Indian.

One Winter, when she was a young woman, Neil Bonner came into her But he came into her life, as he had come into the country, somewhat reluctantly. In fact, it went very much against his grain, coming into the country. Between a father who clipped coupons and cultivated roses, and a mother who loved the social round, Neil Bonner had gone rather wild. He was not vicious, but a man with meat in his belly and without work in the world has to expend his energy somehow, and Neil Bonner was such a man. And he expended his energy in such fashion and to such an extent that when the inevitable climax came, his father, Neil Bonner, senior, crawled out of his roses in a panic and looked on his son with a wondering Then he hied himself away to a crony of kindred pursuits, with whom he was wont to confer over coupons and roses, and between the two the destiny of young Neil Bonner was made manifest. He must go away, on probation, to live down his harmless follies in order that he might live up to their own excellent standard.

This determined upon, and young Neil a little repentant and a great deal ashamed, the rest was easy. The cronies were heavy stockholders in the P. C. Company. The P. C. Company

owned fleets of river-steamers and ocean-going craft, and, in addition to farming the sea, exploited a hundred thousand square miles or so of the land which, on the maps of geographers, usually occupies the white spaces. So the P. C. Company sent young Neil Bonner north, where the white spaces are, to do its work and to learn to be good, like his father. "Five years of simplicity, close to the soil and far from temptation, will make a man of him," said old Neil Bonner, and forthwith crawled back into his jaw. roses. Young Neil set his pitched his chin at the proper angle and went to work. As an underling he did his work well and gained the commendation of his superiors. Not that he delighted in the work, but that it was the one thing that prevented him from going mad.

The first year he wished he were dead. The second year he cursed God. The third year he was divided between the two emotions, and in the confusion quarreled with a man in authority. He had the best of the quarrel, though the man in authority had the last word—a word that sent Neil Bonner into an exile that made his old billet appear as paradise. But he went without a whimper, for the North had succeeded in making him into a man.

Here and there, on the white spaces on the map, little circlets like the letter "o" are to be found, and, appended to these circlets, on one side or the other, are names, such as "Fort Hamilton, "Yanana Station," "Twenty Mile," thus leading one to imagine that the white spaces are plentifully besprinkled with towns and villages. But it is a vain imagining. Twenty Mile, which is very like the rest of the posts, is a log building the size of a corner grocery, with rooms to let up-stairs. long-legged cache on stilts may be found in the back-yard; also a couple The back-yard is unof out-houses. fenced and extends to the sky-line and an unascertainable bit beyond. There are no other houses in sight, though the Toyaats sometimes pitch a Winter

camp a mile or two down the Yukon. And this is Twenty Mile, one tentacle of the many-tentacled P. C. Company. Here the agent, with an assistant, barters with the Indians for their furs and does an erratic trade on a gold-dust basis with the wandering miners. Here, also, the agent and his assistant yearn all Winter for the Spring, and when the Spring comes, camp blasphemously on the roof while the Yukon washes out the establishment. And here, also, in the fourth year of his sojourn in the land, came Neil Bonner to take charge.

He had displaced no agent; for the man who previously ran the post had made away with himself; "because of the rigors of the place," said the assistant, who still remained; though the Toyaats, by their fires, had another version. The assistant was a shrunkenshouldered, hollow-chested man, with cadaverous face and cavernous cheeks which his sparse black beard could not hide. He coughed much, as though consumption gripped his lungs, while his eyes had that mad, fevered light common to consumptives in the last stage. Pentley was his name—Amos Pentley—and Bonner did not like him, though he felt a pity for the forlorn and hopeless devil. They did not get along together, these two men who, of all men, should have been on good terms in the face of the cold and silence and darkness of the long Winter.

In the end, Bonner concluded that Amos was partly demented, and left him alone, doing all the work himself cooking. except the Even then, Amos had nothing but bitter looks and an undisguised hatred for him. This was a great loss to Bonner; for the smiling face of one of his own kind, the cheery word, the sympathy of comradeship shared with misfortune these things meant much; and the Winter was yet young when he began to realize the added reasons, with such an assistant, which the previous agent had found to impel his own hand against his life.

It was very lonely at Twenty Mile.

The bleak vastness stretched away on every side to the horizon. snow, which was really frost, flung its mantle over the land and buried everything in the silence of death. For days it was clear and cold, the thermometer steadily recording forty to fifty degrees below zero. Then a change came over the face of things. What little moisture had oozed into the atmosphere gathered into dull-gray, formless clouds; it became quite warm, the thermometer rising to twenty below; and the moisture fell out of the sky in hard frostgranules that hissed like dry sugar or driving sand when kicked under foot. After that it became clear and cold again, until enough moisture had gathered to blanket the earth from the cold of outer space. That was all. Nothing happened. No storms, no churning waters and threshing forests, nothing but the machine-like precipitation of accumulated moisture. Possibly the most notable thing that occurred through the weary weeks was the gliding of the temperature up to the unprecedented height of fifteen below. To atone for this, outer space smote the earth with its cold till the mercury froze and the spirit thermometer remained more than seventy below for a fortnight, when it burst. There was no telling how much colder it was that. Another occurrence, monotonous in its regularity, was the lengthening of the nights, till day became a mere blink of light between the darknesses.

Neil Bonner was a social animal. The very follies for which he was doing penance had been bred of his excessive sociability. And here, in the fourth year of his exile, he found himself in company—which were to travesty the word—with a morose and speechless creature in whose somber eyes smouldered a hatred as bitter as it was unwarranted. And Bonner, to whom speech and fellowship were as the breath of life, went about as a ghost might go, tantalized by the gregarious revelries of some former life. In the day his lips were compressed,

his face stern; but in the night he clenched his hands, rolled about in his blankets, and cried aloud like a little child. And he would remember a certain man in authority and curse him through the long hours. Also, he But God understands. cursed God. He cannot find it in His heart to blame weak mortals who blaspheme in Alaska.

And here, to the post of Twenty Mile, came Jees Uck, to trade for flour and bacon, and beads and bright scarlet cloths for her fancy work. further, and unwittingly, she came to the post of Twenty Mile to make a lonely man more lonely and to reach out empty arms in his sleep. For Neil Bonner was only a man. When she first came into the store he looked at her long, as a thirsty man may look at a flowing well. And she, with the heritage bequeathed her by Spike O'Brien, imagined daringly smiled up into his eyes, not as the swart-skinned peoples should smile at the royal races, but as a woman smiles at a man. The thing was inevitable; only, he did not see it, and fought against her as fiercely and passionately as he was drawn toward her. And she? She was Jees Uck, by upbringing wholly and utterly a Toyaat Indian woman.

She came often to the post to trade. And often she sat by the big woodstove and chatted in broken English with Neil Bonner. And he came to look for her coming; and on the days she did not come he was worried and restless. Sometimes he stopped to think, and then she was met coldly, with a reserve that perplexed and piqued her; which, she was convinced, was not sincere. But more often he did not dare to think, and then all went well and there were smiles and laughter. And Amos Pentley, gasping like a stranded catfish, his hollow cough a-reek with the grave, looked upon it all and grinned. He, who loved life, could not live, and it rankled his soul that others should be Wherefore he hated able to live. Bonner, who was so very much alive and into whose eyes sprang joy at the

sight of Iees Uck. As for Amos, the very thought of the girl was sufficient to send his blood pounding up into a

hemorrhage.

Jees Uck, whose mind was simple. who thought elementally and was unused to weighing life in its subtler quantities, read Amos Pentley like a book. She warned Bonner, openly and bluntly, in few words; but the complexities of higher existence confused the situation to him and he laughed at her evident anxiety. him, Amos was a poor, miserable devil, tottering desperately into the grave. And Bonner, who had suffered much. found it easy to forgive greatly.

But one morning, during a bitter snap, he got up from the breakfast table and went into the store. Jees Uck was already there, rosy, from the trail, to buy a sack of flour. A few minutes later, he was out in the snow lashing the flour on her sled. As he bent over he noticed a stiffness in his neck and felt a premonition of impending physical misfortune. And as he put the last half-hitch into the lashing and attempted to straighten up, a quick spasm seized him and he sank into the snow. Tense and quivering, head jerked back, limbs extended, back arched and mouth twisted and distorted, he appeared as though being racked limb from limb. Without cry or sound, Jees Uck was in the snow beside him; but he clutched both her wrists spasmodically, and as long as the convulsion endured she was helpless. In a few moments the spasm relaxed and he was left weak and fainting, his forehead beaded with sweat, his lips flecked with foam.

"Quick!" he muttered, in a strange, "Quick! Inside!" hoarse voice.

He started to crawl on hands and knees, but she raised him up, and, supported by her young arm, he made faster progress. As he entered the store the spasm seized him again and his body writhed irresistibly away from her and rolled and curled on the floor. Amos Pentley came and looked on with curious eyes.

"Oh, Amos!" she cried in an agony



of apprehension and helplessness, "him die, you think?" But Amos shrugged his shoulders and continued to look on.

Bonner's body went slack, the tense muscles easing down and an expression of relief coming into his face. "Quick!" he gritted between his teeth, his mouth twisting with the oncoming of the next spasm and with his effort to control it. "Quick, Jees Uck! The medicine! Never mind! Drag me!"

She knew where the medicine-chest stood, at the rear of the room, beyond the stove, and thither, by the legs, she dragged the struggling man. the spasm passed, but very faint and very sick, he began to overhaul the chest. He had seen dogs die exhibiting symptoms similar to his own and he knew what should be done. held up a vial of chloral hydrate, but his fingers were too weak and nerveless to draw the cork. This Jees Uck did for him, while he was plunged into another convulsion. As he came out of it he found the open bottle proffered him and looked into the great black eyes of the woman and read what men have always read in the Mate-Woman's eyes. Taking a full dose of the stuff, he sank back until another spasm had passed. Then he raised himself limply on his elbow.

"Listen, Jees Uck!" he said, very slowly, as though aware of the necessity for haste and yet afraid to hasten. "Do what I say. Stay by my side, but do not touch me. I must be very quiet, but you must not go away." His jaw began to set and his face to quiver and distort with the forerunning pangs, but he gulped and struggled to master them. "Do not go away. And do not let Amos go away. Understand! Amos must stay

right here."

She nodded her head, and he passed off into the first of many convulsions, which gradually diminished in force and frequency. Jees Uck hung over him, remembering his injunction and not daring to touch him. Once Amos grew restless and made as though to go into the kitchen; but a quick

blaze from her eyes quelled him, and after that, save for his labored breathing and charnel cough, he was very quiet.

Bonner slept. The blink of light, which marked the day, disappeared. Amos, followed about by the woman's eyes, lighted the kerosene lamps. Evening came on. Through the north window the heavens were emblazoned with an auroral display, which flamed and flared and died down into black-Some time after that, Neil Bonner roused. First he looked to see that Amos was still there, then smiled at Jees Uck and pulled himself up. Every muscle was stiff and sore, and he smiled ruefully, pressing and prodding himself as if to ascertain the Then his face extent of the ravage. went stern and businesslike.

"Jees Uck," he said, "take a candle. Go into the kitchen. There is food on the table — biscuits and beans and bacon; also, coffee in the pot on the stove. Bring it here on the counter. Also, bring tumblers and water and whiskey, which you will find on the top shelf of the locker. Do not forget the whiskey."

Having swallowed a stiff glass of the whiskey, he went carefully through the medicine-chest, now and again putting aside, with definite purpose, certain bottles and vials. Then he set to work on the food, attempting a crude analysis. He had not been unused to the laboratory in his college days and was possessed of sufficient imagination to achieve results with his limited materials. The condition of tetanus which had marked his paroxysms simplified matters, and he made but one test. The coffee yielded nothing; nor did the beans. biscuits he devoted the utmost care. Amos, who knew nothing of chemistry, looked on with steady curiosity. But Jees Uck, who had boundless faith in the white man's wisdom, and especially in Neil Bonner's wisdom, and who not only knew nothing but knew that she knew nothing, watched his face rather than what he did with his hands.

Step by step, he eliminated possibilities, until he came to the final test. He was using a thin medicine vial for a tube and this he held between him and the light, watching the slow precipitation of a salt through the solution contained in the tube. He said nothing, but he saw what he had expected to see. And Jees Uck, her eyes riveted on his face, saw something, too—something that made her spring like a tigress upon Amos and with splendid suppleness and strength bend his body back across her knee. Her knife was out of its sheath and uplifted, glinting in the lamplight. Amos was snarling; but Bonner intervened ere the blade could

"That's a good girl, Jees Uck. But never mind. Let him go!"

She dropped the man obediently, though with protest writ large on her face; and his body thudded to the floor. Bonner nudged him with his moccasined foot.

"Get up, Amos!" he commanded. "You've got to pack an outfit yet to-night and hit the trail."

"You don't mean to say—" Amos

blurted, savagely.

"I mean to say that you tried to kill me," Neil went on, in cold, even tones. "I mean to say that you killed Birdsall, for all the company believes he killed himself. You used strychnine in my case. God knows with what you fixed him. Now I can't hang you. You're too near dead, as it is. But Twenty Mile is too small for the pair of us, and you've got to mush. It's two hundred miles to Holy Cross. You can make it if you're careful not to over-exert. I'll give you grub, a sled and three dogs. You'll be as safe as if you were in jail, for you can't get out of the And I'll give you one country. Very You're almost dead. chance. I shall send no word to the company until the Spring. In the meantime, the thing for you to do is to die. Now, mush!"

"You go to bed!" Jees Uck insisted, when Amos had churned away into

the night toward Holy Cross. "You sick man yet, Neil."

"And you're a good girl, Jees Uck," he answered. "And here's my hand on it. But you must go home."

"You don't like me," she said,

simply.

He smiled, helped her on with her parka and led her to the door. "Only too well, Jees Uck," he said, softly; "only too well."

After that the pall of the Arctic night fell deeper and blacker on the land. Neil Bonner discovered that he had failed to put the proper valuation upon even the sullen face of the murderous and death-stricken Amos. It became very lonely at Twenty Mile. "For the love of God, Prentiss, send me a man," he wrote to the agent at Fort Hamilton, three hundred miles up river. Six weeks later the Indian messenger brought back a reply. It was characteristic: "Hell. Both feet frozen. Need him myself—Prentiss."

To make matters worse, most of the Toyaats were in the back country on the flanks of a cariboo herd, and Jees Uck was with them. Removing to a distance seemed to bring her closer than ever, and Neil Bonner found himself picturing her, day by day, in camp and on trail. It is not good to be alone. Often he went out of the quiet store, bare-headed and frantic, and shook his fist at the blink of day that came over the southern sky-line. And on still, cold nights he left his bed and stumbled into the frost, where he assaulted the silence at the top of his lungs, as though it were some tangible, sentient thing which he might arouse; or he shouted at the sleeping dogs till they howled and howled again. One shaggy brute he brought into the post, playing that it was the new man sent by Prentiss. He strove to make it sleep decently under blankets at night and to sit at table and eat as a man should; but the beast, mere domesticated wolf that it was, rebelled, and sought out dark corners and snarled and bit him in the leg, and was finally beaten and driven forth.

Then the trick of personification

seized upon Neil Bonner and mastered him. All the cardinal forces of his environment metamorphosed into living, breathing entities and came to live with him. He re-created the primitive pantheon; reared an altar to the sun and burned candle-fat and bacon-grease thereon; and in the unfenced yard, by the long-legged cache, made a frost-devil, which he was wont to make faces at and mock when the mercury climbed down into the bulb. All this in play, of course. He said it to himself that it was in play, and repeated it over and over to make sure, unaware that madness is ever prone to express itself in make-believe and play.

One Midwinter day, Father Champreau, a Jesuit missionary, pulled into Twenty Mile. Bonner fell upon him and dragged him into the post, and clung to him and wept, until the priest wept with him from sheer com-Then Bonner became madly passion. hilarious and made lavish entertainment, swearing valiantly that his guest should not depart. But Father Champreau was pressing to Salt Water on urgent business for his order and pulled out next morning, with Bonner's blood threatened on his head.

And the threat was in a fair way toward realization, when the Toyaats returned from their long hunt to the Winter camp. They had many furs, and there was much trading and stir at Twenty Mile. Also, Jees Uck came to buy beads and scarlet cloths and things, and Bonner began to find him-He fought for a week self again. against her. Then the end came, one night, when she rose to leave. had not forgotten her repulse, and the pride that drove Spike O'Brien on to complete the Northwest Passage by land was her pride.

"I go now," she said; "good night, Neil."

But he came up behind her. "Nay, it is not well," he said.

And as she turned her face toward his with a sudden joyful flash, he bent forward, slowly and gravely, as it were a sacred thing, and kissed her on the lips. The Toyaats had never taught her the meaning of a kiss upon the lips, but she understood and was glad.

With the coming of Jees Uck, at once things brightened up. She was regal in her happiness, a source of unending delight. The elemental workings of her mind and her naïve little ways made a countless sum of pleasurable surprise to the over-civilized man who had stooped to catch her up. Not alone was she solace to his loneliness, but her primitiveness rejuvenated his jaded mind. It was as though, after long wandering, he had returned to pillow his head in the lap of Mother Earth. In short, in Jees Uck he found the youth of the world —the youth and the strength and the joy.

And to fill the full round of his need, and that they might not see overmuch of each other, there arrived at Twenty Mile one Sandy Macpherson, as companionable a man as ever whistled along the trail or raised a ballad by a campfire. A Jesuit priest had run into his camp, a couple of hundred miles up the Yukon, in the nick of time to say a last word over the body of Sandy's And on departing the priest partner. had said, "My son, you will be lonely now." And Sandy had bowed his head brokenly. "At Twenty Mile," the priest added, "there is a lonely You have need of each other, my son."

So it was that Sandy became a welcome third at the post, brother to the man and woman who resided there. He took Bonner moose-hunting and wolf-trapping; and, in return, Bonner resurrected a battered and wayworn volume and made him friends with Shakespeare, till Sandy declaimed Mark Antony to his sled-dogs whenever they waxed mutinous. And of the long evenings they played cribbage and talked and disagreed about the universe, the while Jees Uck rocked matronly in an easy-chair and darned their moccasins and socks.

Spring came. The sun shot up out of the south. The land exchanged its austere robes for the garb of a smiling

wanton. Everywhere light laughed and life invited. The days stretched out their balmy length and the nights passed from blinks of darkness to no darkness at all. The river bared its bosom and snorting steamboats challenged the wilderness. There were stir and bustle, new faces and fresh facts. An assistant arrived at Twenty Mile, and Sandy Macpherson wandered off with a bunch of prospectors to invade the Koyokuk country. And there were newspapers and magazines, and letters for Neil Bonner. And Jees Uck looked on in worriment, for she knew his kindred talked with him across the world.

Without much shock, it came to him that his father was dead. was a sweet letter of forgiveness, dictated in his last hours. There were official letters from the company, graciously ordering him to turn the post over to the assistant and permitting him to depart at his earliest pleasure. A long, legal affair from the lawyers informed him of interminable lists of stocks and bonds, real estate, rents and chattels that were his by his father's will. And a dainty bit of stationery, sealed and monogramed, implored dear Neil's return to his heartbroken, helpless and loving mother.

Neil Bonner did some swift thinking, and when the Yukon Belle coughed in to the bank on her way down to Bering Sea, he departed—departed, with the ancient lie of quick return young and blithe on his lips.

"I'll come back, dear Jees Uck, before the first snow flies," he promised her, between the last kisses at the gangplank.

And not only did he promise, but, like the majority of men under the same circumstances, he really meant it. To John Thompson, the new agent, he gave orders for the extension of unlimited credit to his wife, Jees Uck. Also, with his last look from the deck of the Yukon Belle, he saw a dozen men at work rearing the logs that were to make the most comfortable house along a thousand miles of river-front—the house of Jees Uck, and likewise the

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house of Neil Bonner-ere the first flurry of snow. For he fully and fondly meant to come back. Jees Uck was dear to him, and, further, a golden future waited the North. With his father's money he intended to verify that future. An ambitious dream allured him. With his four years of experience, and aided by the friendly cooperation of the P. C. Company, he would return to become the Rhodes of Alaska. And he would return, fast as steam could drive, as soon as he had put into shape the affairs of his father, whom he had never known, and comforted his mother, whom he had forgotten.

There was much ado when Neil Bonner came back from the Arctic. The fires were lighted and the fleshpots slung, and he took of it all and called it good. Not only was he bronzed and creased, but he was a new man under his skin, with a grip on things and a seriousness and control. His old companions amazed when he declined to hit up the pace in the good old way, while his father's crony rubbed hands gleefully and became an authority upon the reclamation of wayward and idle youth.

For four years Neil Bonner's mind had lain fallow. Little that was new had been added to it, but it had undergone a process of selection. It had, so to say, been purged of the trivial and superfluous. He had lived quick years, down in the world; and up in the wilds, time had been given him to organize the confused mass of his experiences. His superficial standards had been flung to the winds and new standards erected on deeper and broader generalizations. Concerning civilization, he had gone away with one set of values, had returned with another set of values. Aided, also, by the earth-smells in his nostrils and the earth-sights in his eyes, he laid hold of the inner significance of civilization, beholding with clear vision its futilities and powers. It was a simple little philosophy he evolved. living was the way to grace.

performed was sanctification. One must live clean and do his duty in order that he might work. Work was salvation. And to work toward life abundant, and more abundant, was to be in line with the scheme of things and the will of God.

Primarily, he was of the city. And his fresh earth-grip and virile conception of humanity gave him a finer sense of civilization and endeared civilization to him. Day by day the people of the city clung closer to him and the world loomed more colossal. And, day by day, Alaska grew more remote and less real. And then he met Kitty Sharon—a woman of his own flesh and blood and kind; a woman who put her hand into his hand and drew him to her, till he forgot the day and hour and the time of the year the first snow flies on the Yukon.

Jees Uck moved into her grand loghouse and dreamed away three golden Summer months. Then came the Autumn, post-haste before the down-rush of Winter. The air grew thin and sharp, the days thin and short. river ran sluggishly and skin-ice formed in the quiet eddies. All migratory life departed south and silence fell upon the land. The first snowflurries came and the last homing steamboat bucked desperately into the running mush-ice. Then came the hard ice, solid cakes and sheets, till the Yukon ran level with its banks. And when all this ceased the river stood still and the blinking days lost themselves in the darkness.

John Thompson, the new agent, laughed; but Jees Uck had faith in the mischances of sea and river. Neil Bonner might be frozen in anywhere between Chilcoot Pass and St. Michael's, for the last travelers of the year are always caught by the ice, when they exchange boat for sled and dash on through the long hours behind the flying dogs.

But no flying dogs came up the trail, or down the trail, to Twenty Mile. And John Thompson told Jees Uck, with a certain gladness ill-concealed, that Bonner would never come back

again. Also, and brutally, he suggested his own eligibility. Jees Uck laughed in his face and went back to her grand log-house. But when Midwinter came, when hope dies down and life is at its lowest ebb, Jees Uck found she had no credit at the store. This was Thompson's doing, and he rubbed his hands, and walked up and down, and came to his door and looked up at Jees Uck's house, and waited. And he continued to wait. She sold her dog-team to a party of miners and paid cash for her food. And when Thompson refused to honor even her coin, Toyaat Indians made her purchases and sledded them up to her house in the dark.

In February the first post came in over the ice, and John Thompson read in the society column of a five-months'old paper of the marriage of Neil Bonner and Kitty Sharon. Jees Uck held the door ajar and him outside while he imparted the information; and, when he had done, laughed pridefully and did not believe. In March, and all alone, she gave birth to a manchild, a brave bit of new life at which she marveled. And at that hour, a year later. Neil Bonner sat by another bed, marveling at another bit of new life which had fared into the world.

The snow went off the ground and the ice broke out of the Yukon. sun journeyed north, and journeyed south again; and, the money from the dogs being spent, Jees Uck went back to her own people. Oche Ish, a shrewd hunter, proposed to kill the meat for her and her babe, and catch the salmon, if she would marry him. And Imego and Hah Yo and Wy Nooch, husky young hunters all, made similar proposals. But she elected to live alone and seek her own meat and fish. She sewed moccasins and parkas and mittens-warm, serviceable things, and pleasing to the eye, withal, what of the ornamental hair-tufts and bead work. These she sold to the miners, who were drifting faster into the land each year. And not only did she win food that was plain and plentiful, but she laid money by, and one day took passage on the Yukon Belle down the river.

At St. Michael's she washed dishes in the kitchen of the post. The servants of the company wondered at the remarkable woman with the remarkable child, though they asked no questions and she vouchsafed nothing. But just before Bering Sea closed in for the year, she bought a passage south on a strayed sealing-schooner. That Winter she cooked for Captain Markheim's household at Unalaska, and in the Spring continued south to Sitka on a whiskey-sloop. Later, she appeared at Metlakahtla, which is near to St. Mary's on the end of the Pan-Handle, where she worked in the cannery through the salmon season. When Autumn came and the Siwash fishermen prepared to return to Puget Sound, she embarked with a couple of families in a big cedar canoe; and with them she threaded the hazardous chaos of the Alaskan and Canadian coasts, till the Straits of Juan de Fuca were passed and she led her boy by the hand up the hard pave of Seattle.

There she met Sandy Macpherson, on a windy corner, very much surprised and, when he had heard her story, very wroth—not so wroth as he might have been, had he known of Kitty Sharon; but of her Jees Uck breathed no word, for she had never believed. Sandy, who read commonplace and sordid desertion into the circumstance, strove to dissuade her from her trip to San Francisco, where Neil Bonner was supposed to live when he was at home. And having striven, he made her comfortable, bought her tickets and saw her off, the while smiling in her face and muttering, "damshame," into his beard.

With roar and rumble, through daylight and dark, swaying and lurching between the dawns, soaring into the Winter snows and sinking to Summer valleys, skirting depths, leaping chasms, piercing mountains, Jees Uck and her boy were hurled south. But she had no fear of the iron stallion; nor was she stunned by this masterful civilization of Neil Bonner's people. It seemed, rather, that she saw with greater clearness the wonder that a man of such god-like race had held her in his arms. The screaming medley of San Francisco, with its restless shipping, belching factories and thundering traffic, did not confuse her; instead, she comprehended swiftly the pitiful sordidness of Twenty Mile and the skin-lodged Toyaat village. And she looked down at the boy who clutched her hand and wondered that she had borne him by such a man.

She paid the hack-driver five prices and went up the stone steps to Neil Bonner's front door. A slant-eyed Japanese parleyed with her for a fruitless space, then led her inside and disappeared. She remained in the hall, which to her simple fancy seemed to be the guest-room—the show-place wherein were arrayed all the household treasures, with the frank purpose of parade and dazzlement. The walls and ceiling were of oiled and paneled redwood. The floor was more glassy than glare-ice, and she sought standing place on one of the great skins that gave a sense of security to the polished surface. A huge fireplace—almost an extravagant fireplace, she deemed ityawned in the farther wall. A flood of light, mellowed by stained glass, fell across the room, and from the far end came the white gleam of a marble figure.

This much she saw, and more, when the slant-eyed servant led the way past another room—of which she caught a fleeting glance—and into a third, both of which dimmed the brave show of the entrance-hall. And to her eyes the great house seemed to hold out a promise of endless similar rooms. There was such length and breadth to them, and the ceilings were so far away! For the first time since her advent into the white man's civilization, a feeling of awe laid hold of her. Neil, her Neil, lived in this house, breathed the air of it, and laid down at night and slept! It was beautiful, all this that she saw, and it pleased her; but she felt, also, the wisdom and mastery behind. It was the concrete expression of power in terms of beauty, and it was the power that she unerringly divined.

And then came a woman, queenly tall, crowned with a glory of hair that was like a golden sun. She seemed to come toward Jees Uck as a ripple of music across still water; her sweeping garment itself a song, her body playing rhythmically beneath. Iees Uck was herself a man-compeller. There were Oche Ish and Imego and Hah Yo and Wy Nooch, to say nothing of Neil Bonner and John Thompson and other white men who had looked upon her and felt her power. But she gazed upon the wide blue eyes and rose-white skin of this woman who advanced to meet her, and she measured her with woman's eyes, looking through man's eyes; and as a man-compeller she felt herself diminish and grow insignificant before this radiant and flashing crea-

"You wish to see my husband?" the woman asked; and Jees Uck gasped at the liquid silver of a voice that had never sounded harsh cries at snarling wolf-dogs, nor moulded itself to a guttural speech, nor toughened in storm and frost and campsmoke.

"No," Jees Uck answered, slowly and gropingly, in order that she might do justice to her English. "I come to see Neil Bonner."

"He is my husband," the woman laughed.

Then it was true! John Thompson had not lied that bleak February day, when she laughed pridefully and shut the door in his face. As she had thrown Amos Pentley across her knee and ripped her knife into the air, so she felt impelled to spring upon this woman and bear her back and down, and tear the life out of her fair body. But Jees Uck was thinking quickly and gave no sign, and Kitty Bonner little dreamed how intimately she had for an instant been related with sudden death.

Jees Uck nodded her head that she understood, and Kitty Bonner explained that Neil was expected at any moment. Then they sat down on ridiculously comfortable chairs, and Kitty sought to entertain her strange visitor, and Jees Uck strove to help her.

"You knew my husband in the North?" Kitty asked once.

"Sure. I wash um clothes," Jees Uck had answered, her English abruptly beginning to grow atrocious. "And this is your boy? I have a

little girl."

Kitty caused her daughter to be brought, and, while the children, after their manner, struck an acquaintance, the mothers indulged in the talk of mothers and drank tea from cups so fragile that Jees Uck feared lest hers should crumble to pieces between her fingers. Never had she seen such cups, so delicate and dainty. In her mind she compared them with the woman who poured the tea, and there uprose in contrast the gourds and pannikins of the Toyaat village and the clumsy mugs of Twenty Mile, to which she likened herself. And in such fashion and such terms, the problem presented itself. She was There was a woman other than herself better fitted to bear and upbring Neil Bonner's children. Just as his people exceeded her people, so did his womenkind exceed her. They were the man-compellers, as their men were the world-compellers. looked at the rose-white tenderness of Kitty Bonner's skin and remembered the sun-beat on her own face. Likewise she looked from brown hand to white—the one, work-worn and hardened by whip-handle and paddle, the other as guiltless of toil and soft as a new-born babe's. And, for all the obvious softness and apparent weakness, Jees Uck looked into the blue eyes and saw the mastery she had seen in Neil Bonner's eyes and in the eyes of Neil Bonner's people.

"Why, it's Jees Uck!" Neil Bonner said, when he entered. He said it calmly, with even a ring of joyful cordiality, coming over to her and shaking both her hands, but looking

into her eyes with a worry in his own which she understood.

"Hello, Neil!" she said. "You look

much good."

"Fine, fine, Jees Uck," he answered, heartily, though secretly studying Kitty for some sign of what had passed between the two. Yet he knew his wife too well, even though the worst had passed, to expect such a sign.

"Well, I can't say how glad I am to see you," he went on. "What's happened? Did you strike a mine?

And when did you get in?"

"Oo-a, I get in to-day," she replied, her voice instinctively seeking its guttural parts. "I no strike it, Neil. You know Cap'n Markheim, Unalaska? I cook, his house, long time. No spend money. Bime-by, plenty. Pretty good, I think, go down and see White Man's Land. Very fine, White Man's Land, very fine," she added.

Her English puzzled him, for Sandy and he had sought, constantly, to better her speech, and she had proved an apt pupil. Now it seemed that she had sunk back into her race. Her face was guileless, stolidly guileless, giving no cue. Kitty's untroubled brow likewise baffled him. What had happened? How much had been said? and how much guessed?

While he wrestled with these questions and while Jees Uck wrestled with her problem—never had he looked so wonderful and great—a

silence fell.

"To think that you knew my husband in Alaska!" Kitty said, softly.

Knew him! Jees Uck could not forbear a glance at the boy she had borne him, and his eyes followed hers mechanically to the window where were the two children. The sight was to him as a blow between the eyes. An iron band seemed to tighten across his forehead. His knees went weak and his heart leaped up and pounded like another fist against his breast. His boy! He had never dreamed it!

Little Kitty Bonner, fairy-like in gauzy lawn, with pinkest of cheeks and bluest of dancing eyes, arms outstretched and lips puckered in invitation, was striving to kiss the boy. And the boy, lean and lithe, sunbeaten and browned, skin-clad and in hair-fringed and hair-tufted muclucs that showed the wear of the sea and rough work, coolly withstood her advances, his body straight and stiff with the peculiar erectness common to children of savage people. A stranger in a strange land, unabashed and unafraid, he appeared more like an untamed animal, silent and watchful, his black eyes flashing from face to face, quiet so long as quiet endured, but prepared to spring and fight and tear and scratch for life, at the first sign of danger.

The contrast between boy and girl was striking, but not pitiful. There was too much strength in the boy for that, waif that he was of the generations of Shpack, Spike O'Brien and Bonner. In his features, clean-cut as a cameo and almost classic in their severity, there was the power and achievement of his father, and his grandfather, and the one known as the Big Fat, who was captured by the Sea People and escaped to Kamchatka.

Neil Bonner fought his emotion down, swallowed it down and choked over it, though his face smiled with good humor and the joy with which one meets a friend.

"Your boy, eh, Jees Uck?" he said. And then, turning to Kitty: "Handsome fellow! He'll do something with those two hands of his in this our world."

Kitty nodded concurrence. "What

is your name?" she asked.

The young savage flashed his quick eyes upon her and dwelt over her for a space, seeking out, as it were, the motive beneath the question.

"Neil," he answered, deliberately, when the scrutiny had satisfied him.

"Injun talk," Jees Uck interposed, glibly manufacturing language on the spur of the moment. "Him Injun talk, nee-al, all the same 'cracker.' Him baby, him like cracker; him cry for cracker. Him say 'nee-al,' 'nee-al,' all time him say 'nee-al.'

Then I say that um name. So um name all time Nee-al."

Never did sound more blessed fall upon Neil Bonner's ear than that lie from Jees Uck's lips. It was the cue, and he knew there was reason for Kitty's untroubled brow.

"And his father?" Kitty asked.

"He must be a fine man."

"Oo-a, yes," was the reply. "Um father fine man. Sure!"

"Did you know him, Neil?" queried

Kitty

"Know him? Most intimately," Neil answered, and harked back to dreary Twenty Mile and the man alone in the silence with his thoughts.

And here might well end the story of Jees Uck, but for the crown she put upon her renunciation. When she returned to the North to dwell in her grand log-house, John Thompson found that the P. C. Company could make a shift somehow to carry on its business without his valuable aid. Also, the new agent and the succeeding agents, received instructions that the woman Jees Uck should be given whatsoever goods and grub she desired, in whatsoever quantities she ordered, and that no charge be placed upon the Further, the company paid yearly to the woman Jees Uck a pension of five thousand dollars.

When he had attained suitable age, Father Champreau laid hands upon the boy, and the time was not long when Jees Uck received letters regularly from the Jesuit college in Maryland. Later on these letters came from Italy, and still later from France. And in the end there returned to Alaska one Father Neil, a man mighty for good in the land, who loved his mother and who ultimately went into a wider field and rose to high authority in the order.

Jees Uck was a young woman when she went back into the North, and men still looked upon yearned. But she lived straight, and no breath was ever raised save in commendation. She stayed for a while with the good sisters at Holy Cross, where she learned to read and write and became versed in practical medicine and surgery. After that she returned to her grand log-house and gathered about her the young girls of the Toyaat village, to show them the way of their feet in the world. It is neither Protestant nor Catholic, this school in the house built by Neil Bonner for Jees Uck, his wife; but the missionaries of all the sects look upon it with equal favor. The latch-string is always out, and tired prospectors and trail-weary men turn aside from the flowing river or frozen trail, to rest there for a space and be warm by her And down in the States Kitty Bonner is pleased at the interest her husband takes in Alaskan education and the large sums he devotes to that purpose; and, though she often smiles and chaffs, deep down and secretly she is but the prouder of him.



THE WAVES, TOO

THE beach's Sunday quiet's oft
Disturbed by merry-makers;
Down on the seashore, e'en the waves
Are surely Sabbath-breakers.

3

A MAN'S worst enemy is generally himself, but a woman's is usually her "best friend."

THE BEAUTIFUL

By Marvin Dana

WHAT is the beautiful?

My spirit soared in the calm night air
And saw a mountain spire that rose
Aloft toward heaven, trending far,
A soundless symbol, still and fair,
The peace of ages in its pose.
Soft splendors shone from one lone star,
Its chastened beams the only light
That dawned upon my raptured sight—
And this was beautiful.

What is the beautiful?

My spirit flew with the darting gale
And saw the surge of a shoreless sea,
Where the wild waves wantoned in ceaseless power,
As pulse of life that ne'er shall fail.
My spirit looked afar from me
And saw in the dusk of the morning hour
A stately ship, whose sails were white
With the unrisen sun's first light—
And this was beautiful.

What is the beautiful?

My spirit drowsed on a perfumed plain
And saw a splendor of color-schemes,
Inwrought of blossoms that swung and swayed
In prismed glories 'neath kisses of rain,
As tinted signs of a soul's glad dreams.
The flowers flaunted the breeze that played,
While out from the mist-strewn dark of the sky
One sunbeam stole as the clouds passed by—
And this was beautiful.

What is the beautiful?

My spirit poised in endless space,

With naught to lose and naught to keep,

In a negative cosmos of emptiness.

And there was nothing, nor time nor place,

But one dull dream of eternal sleep,

A languor of the limitless.

So brooded in my soul soft peace,

The bliss that dawns when all things cease—

And this was beautiful.

What is the beautiful?

My spirit looked in the heavenly span

And saw a stately and splendid thing,

A form of graces and loveliness,

Which from far depths below began

A lofty flight on viewless wing;

Its very passing seemed to bless.

With glories crowned, with virtues shod,

A soul flew, seeking love—and God!—

This was the beautiful.



THE CAPRICIOUSNESS OF MEMORY

DOWN on the shifting sands of life where the waves of time wash in, a man and a boy rested one day. Presently, strolling along the beach came a woman, tall and very like a goddess. Now and then she would stoop to the sands and pick up something.

As she passed them, the man uncovered, and she smiled softly in return.

"Who is she, father?" asked the boy.
"That is Memory," replied the man.

"And what is she doing—this Memory?"

"She is gathering treasures from the sands of life to store in her curious, big cabinet."

"Ah!" said the boy, resting his dimpled chin in the palms of his hands

and watching her closely. Then he exclaimed:

"But, father, look, how strangely she selects! Do you see that exquisite, rosy shell she has just passed? Why did she not pick it up, instead of that ugly little clam-shell? And there! that pebble by the sea-weed, which shines like a diamond—why did she not take that, instead of the slimy sea-weed?"

The man shook his head and smiled sadly.

"My son," he said, "Memory is capricious; you cannot tell what treasures she will select for her storehouse, or what things she will reject. Nevertheless, though we may not understand, there is a method in her madness; she has a scale of her own by which she judges the things that are to go into her cabinet. Be sure of that."

In after years the boy, grown to manhood, wondered why he remembered this incident, but forgot even the name of the big bank president who was his

father's guest at dinner that night.

VIRGINIA LEILA WENTZ.



A POINT IN MANNERS

A SELF-RESPECTING horse dines table d'oat; Salle à manger goes straight to his heart; But never ask him (this 'tis well to note) To take his dinner with you à la cart.

A MAN AND A MAID

By Alice Stead Binney

" TENNIE!"

"Well, John?" quietly.

How long is this sort of thing

to last?"
"What sort of thing?" too inno-

"This flirting with every new fellow that comes along."

"I didn't!" quite ungrammatic-

ally.

"You—" he did not say "did" because he caught her expectant look— "danced at least half the dances last night with that Throop, or Trope, or Tripe—or whatever his name may be."

"John, I've always told you I would give up dancing altogether if you wished." Her tone was mild and her inflection rising.

"I don't ask you to give it up. But it certainly is like flirting to pick out

one partner—"

"I didn't pick him out."

"No; but you let him pick you out willingly enough."

"Well, Mr. Thorpe is a good dancer."

She smiled, reminiscently.

"Well, if any jumping jackanapes that can shuffle his feet to rag-time can make you so much happier than I can—"

"Don't be a fool, John!"

"That's just the truth! I am a fool—you've made me a fool—and, not content with that, you hold me up as a fool to be laughed at by your friends—and I won't stand it." His tone was forcible and his inflection falling.

"Are you jealous, John?"

"Not of that kind of chap. But if you've got to treat me like—nothing—because I can't dance——"

"Why, I went to supper with you and let at least four dances go by while we talked in the cozy corner."

"Well, I think I'd better not go to any more dances; I'm only a wallflower anyway, and I don't like the idiotic grin on the men's faces when they come to take you away."

"Oh, I see! My mother always told me it was safe enough to walk on a man's feelings, so long as you did not

touch his vanity."

Then John bolted through the door and slammed it behind him. And Jennie? She sighed and then smiled—and fretted not at all.

'Twas only "The Way of a Man with

a Maid."

"John!"

"Yes, dear!"

"You're late to-night."

"I know. I was late leaving the office."

"What kept you?"

"I was busy—and then Tom came in."

"Oh, Tom!" comprehensively. "Did

you get the cards for me?"

"No-er-I'm sorry, dear, but

"Forgot them, I suppose. Never mind. Was Tom after you to go fishing to-morrow?"

"Yes, but---"

"Oh, don't apologize! I might have expected it. Three Sundays with no fishing must have nearly killed you. I knew something was making you miserable! And I have known it was a mistake for you to be engaged to a girl that can't stand the water!"

"But I didn't say I'd go!"

"No?" sarcastically. "Why did you keep Tom in suspense?"

"I told him I knew you'd be mad

if I went."

"Indeed! So you let Tom into the secret of your sufferings from my self-ishness! I hope he was properly indignant for your sake!"

"No; he only said he had hardly expected I'd go, but as I had not been at all this Summer, and he and George had good sport last week——"

"Well, let me tell you, you are welcome to go fishing to-morrow and every other Sunday as long as you live, so far as I'm concerned. And I don't intend that your friends shall need to be sorry for you, or make allowances for you on my account."

Then she gathered up her skirts with a dainty flip and strolled down the path into the shadows. And John? He relighted his cigar, put both feet on the railing and smiled up at the stars.

'Twas only "The Way of a Maid

with a Man.'

"Jennie!"
"Yes, John!"

"Aren't you coming back to the porch?"

"I think not—to-night."

"Well, say good night to me here, then."

"Why, you're not going, are you?" She stood up; then sat down again.

The rustic seat nestled against the trunk of the big old oak and was irresistibly inviting.

He sat down alongside of her and, unrebuked, stroked her hair with one hand and with the other gathered up both of hers.

"I know it is not very late, but I am tired. I had better go." He was

very gentle.

"Oh, John! I believe you're not well; that hot office is so bad for you these long days. But to-morrow will put you right."

"To-morrow?"

"Yes; I found Bobby down here and I sent him over to Tom's house to tell him you would surely meet him at the dock in the morning. Then we'll have a moonlight drive after tea."

It was hard to get through that long speech without interruption, but

she managed it.

"I forgot to tell you"—he was going at last—"I have chartered the launch to take us to the Yacht Club dance; it will get you there as early as driving, and we'll have the sail as well."

"But I told the girls I wasn't going, John. I would just as soon not."

"You must go, dear. And those two madcap sisters of mine declare that with your help I could be made to two-step quite decently by the fifteenth."

"Oh, John!"

'Twas ever "The Way of a Man and a Maid!"

CIA

FORETHOUGHT

WHEN I sit before the fire in my hoary-headed age,
When I may not read because I cannot see the printed page;
When I may not dine off terrapin, or canvas-back, nor try
A new brand of champagne, because dyspepsia hovers by;
When I may no longer whisper in a pretty woman's ear,
"I love you!"—for her answer I shall be too deaf to hear—
What if Memory has no gladness from that past wherein I live,
When the only pleasures left me are the joys my memories give?

Thus I answer all the critics who are mocking at my ways: Let me have a past to dwell on in the Winter of my days! LOUISE WINTER.

"AS THE COMING OF DAWN"

By James Branch Cabell

H, I say, you know!" observed Billy Woods, as he finished the sixth chapter of "Ashtaroth's Lacquey," and

fung down the book.

"Rot, utter rot," assented Mr. Charteris, pleasantly; "puerile and futile trifling with the fragments of the seventh commandment, as your sturdy common sense instantly detected. In fact," he added, hopefully, "I think it's quite bad enough to go into a tenth edition."

Coming from the author, this should have been fairly conclusive; but Billy refused to be comforted. "Look here, Jack!" said he, pathetically, "why don't you brace up and write some-

thing—decent?"

Charteris flicked the ashes from his cigarette, with conscious grace. "Is not impropriety the spice of literature?" he queried, softly. "Sybarite that I am, I have descended to this that I might furnish butter for my daily bread!" He refilled his glass and held the sparkling drink for a moment against the light. "This time next year," said he, dreamily, "I shall be able to afford cake; for I shall have written 'As the Coming of Dawn."

Mr. Woods sniffed, and refilled his

glass likewise.

"For the reign of subtle immorality," sighed Mr. Charteris, "is well-nigh over. Already the augurs of the pen wink as they fable of a race of men evily scintillant in talk and gracefully erotic. We know that this, alas, cannot be, and that in real life our peccadilloes shrink into dreary vistas of divorce-cases and the policecourt, and that crime has lost its

splendor. We sin very carelessly—sordidly, at times—and artistic wickedness is rare. It is a pity; life was once a scarlet volume scattered with misty-coated demons; it is now a yellow journal, wherein our virtues are the not infrequent misprints, and our vices the hackneyed formulas of journalists. Yes, it is a pity!"

nalists. Yes, it is a pity!"
"Dear Jack," remonstrated Mr.
Woods, "you are sadly passé; that
pose is of the Beardsley period and

went out many magazines ago."

"The point is well taken," admitted Mr. Charteris, "for our life of to-day is already reflected—faintly, I grant you—in the best-selling books. We have passed through the period of a slavish admiration for wickedness and wide margins; our quondam decadents now snigger in a parody of primeval innocence, and many things are forgiven the latter-day poet if his botany be irreproachable. Indeed, it is quite time; for we have tossed over the contents of every closet in the ménage à trois. And I -moi, qui vous parle-I am wearied of hansom-cabs and the flaring lights of Broadway, and henceforth I shall demonstrate the beauty of pastoral innocence."

"Saul among the prophets," sug-

gested Mr. Woods, helpfully.

"Quite so," assented Mr. Charteris; "and my first prophecy will be 'As the Coming of Dawn.'"

Mr. Woods tapped his forehead significantly. "Mad, quite mad!" said

he, in parenthesis.

"I shall be idyllic," continued Mr. Charteris, sweetly. "I shall write of the ineffable glory of first love; I

shall babble of green fields and the keen odors of Spring and the shamefaced countenances of lovers met after It will be the last night's kissing. story of love that stirs blindly in the hearts of maids and youths, and does not know that it is love—the love that manhood has half forgotten and that youth has not skill to write of. But I shall write its story as it has never been written before; and I shall make a great book of it, that will go into thousands and thousands of editions. Before heaven, I will!" He brought his fist down emphatically on the table.

"H'm!" said Mr. Woods, dubiously; "going back to renew associations with your first love? You'll find her grandchildren terribly in the way, you know."

"It is imperative," said Mr. Charteris, shortly, "for the scope of my book that I should view life through

youthful eyes."

Mr. Woods whistled softly. "'Honorable young gentleman,'" he murmured, as to himself, "'desires to meet attractive young lady. Object: to learn how to be idyllic in four-hundred pages.'"

There was no answer.

"I say, Jack," queried Mr. Woods, "do you think this—this sort of thing is fair to the girl? Isn't it a little cold-blooded?"

Charteris smiled, somewhat evasively. "To-morrow," said he, with firmness, "I leave Greenfield Springs in search of 'As the Coming of Dawn."

"Look here," said Mr. Woods; "if you start on a tour of the country, looking for assorted dawns and idylls, it'll end in my bailing you out of the lock-up. You take a liver-pill and go to bed."

II

CHARTERIS notified the hotel-clerk and the newspaper correspondents next morning that Greenfield was about to be bereft of the presence of the distinguished novelist. Then, as his train did not leave till night, he resolved to be bored on horseback, rather than on the golf-links, and had Chloris summoned from the stables for a final investigation of the country roads thereabouts.

Chloris elected to follow a new route this afternoon shortly after leaving the hotel grounds, and Charteris, knowing by long experience that any questioning of this decision could but result in undignified defeat, assented. Thus it came about that they trotted down a green country lane and came to a narrow brook, which babbled across the roadway and was overhung with thick foliage that lisped and whispered cheerfully in the placid light of the declining sun. It was there that the germ of "As the Coming of Dawn" was found.

For Charteris had fallen into a revery, and Chloris, taking advantage of this, twitched the reins from his hand and proceeded to satisfy her thirst in a manner that was rather too noisy to be quite good form. Charteris sat in patience, idly observing the sparkling reflection of the sunlight on the water. Then Chloris snorted, as something rustled through the underbrush, and Charteris, turning, perceived a vision.

The vision was in white, with a maddening profusion of open-work. There were blue ribbons connected with it. There were also black eyes, of the almond-shaped, heavy-lidded sort that Charteris had thought existed only in Lely's pictures, and great coils of brown hair that was gold where the chequered sunlight fell upon it, and two lips that were very red. He was filled with a deep pity for his tired horse and a resolve that for this once her thirst should be quenched. Thereupon, he lifted his cap hastily, but Chloris scrambled to the other bank, spluttered, and had carried him a quarter of a mile before Charteris announced to the evening air that he was a fool and that Chloris was various picturesque but uncomplimentary things. Then he smiled, equivocally.

"Dainty little Philistine!" said he.

After this they retraced their steps, Charteris peering anxiously about the road.

"Pardon me," said Charteris, subsequently; "have you seen anything of a watch—a small gold one, set with pearls?"

"Heavens!" said the vision, sympathetically, "what a pity! Are you

sure it fell here?"

"I don't seem to have it about me," answered Charteris, with cryptic significance. He searched about his pockets, with a puckered brow. "And as we stopped here-" He looked inquiringly into the water.

"From this side," observed the vision, impersonally, "there is less glare from the brook."

Having tied Chloris to a swinging limb. Charteris sat down contentedly. The vision moved hurriedly, lest he should be crowded.

"It might be further up the road,"

she suggested, demurely.

"I must have left it at the hotel," observed Charteris, rapt in meditation.

"You might look," said she, peering

into the water.

"Forever!" assented he, rather fatuously.

The vision flushed. mean—" she began. "I didn't

"I did," quoth Charteris, "every word of it."

"In that case," said she, rising, "I shall—" A frown wrinkled her brow; then a deep, curved dimple performed a similar office for her cheek, as Charteris sighed pathetically. "I wonder-" said she, with some hesitation.

"Of course not," said he, compos-

edly; "there's nobody about.

The vision sat down. "You mentioned your sanatorium?" quoth she,

sweetly.

"The Asylum of Love," said Charteris; "discharged-under a false impression—as cured; and sent to paradise."

"Oh!" said she.

"It is," said he, defiant.

She looked about her. "The woods are beautiful," she conceded, softly.

"They form an admirable back-ound," said he, with some irreleground," said he, with some irrelevance. "It is a veritable Eden, before the coming of the snake."

"Before?" queried she, dubiously.

"Undoubtedly," said Charteris. He felt his ribs, in meditative wise. just after-"

"It is quite time," said she, judi-

cially, "for me to go home."
"It is not good," pleaded Charteris,

"for man to be alone." "I have heard," said she, "that

the—almost any one can cite Scripture to his purpose."

Charteris thrust out a foot for inspection. "No suggestion of a hoof," said he; "no odor of brimstone, and my inoffensive name is John Charteris.'

"Of course," she submitted, virtuously, "I could never think of making your acquaintance in this irregular fashion; and, therefore, of course, I could not think of telling you that my name is Marian Winwood."

"Of course not," agreed Charteris;

"it would be highly improper."

There was an interval. Charteris smiled.

"I am country-bred," said she, in flushed explanation; "and you are-

"A citizen of no mean city," he admitted. "I am from New York!"

"—horrid," finished she.

Charteris groaned, miserably.

"But I have been to New York," said she.

"Ah?" said he, vacantly. "Eden Musée?"

"Yes," said she, with ill-concealed pride.

Charteris groaned once again.

"And it is quite time for me to go to supper," she concluded, with some lack of sequence.

"Look here!" remonstrated he; "it isn't six yet." He exhibited his watch to support this statement.

"Oh!" she cried, with wide, indignant

"I—I mean—" stammered he.

She rose to her feet.

"—I'll explain—

"I do not care to listen to any explanations."

"-to-morrow."

"You will not." This was said very "And I hope you will have the kindness to keep away from these woods; for I always walk here in the afternoon." Then, with an indignant toss of the head, the vision disappeared.

Charteris whistled. Subsequently,

he galloped back to the hotel.

See here!" said he, to the hotelclerk; "how long does this place keep

"Season closes October fifteenth,

sir."

"All right; I'll need my room till then. Here, boy! See if my luggage has been taken to the station; and, if it has, send it back—Charteris, Room 249—and be quick!"

III

"IT will be very dreadful," sighed she, in a tired voice; "for I shall come here every afternoon. And there will be only ghosts in the woods wistful, pathetic ghosts of dead days and I shall be very lonely.'

"Dear," said Charteris, "is it not something to have been happy? has been such a wonderful Summer, and come what may, nothing—nothing—can rob us of its least golden moment. And it is only for a little."

"You will come back?" said she,

half-doubtingly.

"Yes," said Charteris, and felt the black waves of degradation and unutterable self-contempt sweep over his soul, like a flood, and wash the manhood from it. "You wonderful, elfin creature, I shall come back to your home, that I have seen only from a distance. I don't believe you live there—you live in some great, gnarled oak hereabouts, and at night its bark uncloses to set you free, and you and your sisters dance out the satyrs' hearts in the moonlight. know you are a dryad—a wonderful, laughing, clear-eyed dryad strayed out of the golden age."

"Alas!" said she, sadly; "I am only a girl, dear-a very weak, frightened girl, with very little disposition to laughter just now. For you are going away. Oh, Jack, you have meant so much to me! The world is so different since you have come, and I am so happy and so miserable that—that I am afraid.'' An impossible, infinitesimal handkerchief stole upward to two great, sparkling eyes.

"Dear!" said Charteris. And this remark appeared to meet the require-

ments of the situation.

Then there was a silence which he devoted to a consideration of the pitiful littleness of his soul. Autumn woods flushed and burned about them; there was already the damp odor of decaying leaves in the The whinnying of Chloris smote the stillness like an impertinence. The Summer was ended; but "As the Coming of Dawn" was practically complete.

It was not the book that Charteris had planned, but a far greater one that was scarcely his. There was no word written, as yet. But for two months he had viewed life through Marian Winwood's eyes; day by day, his half-formed, tentative ideas had been laid before her with elaborate carelessness, to be approved, altered or rejected, as she decreed, until at last they were welded into a perfect, compact whole that was a book. Bit by bit, they had planned it, he and she; and, as Charteris dreamed of it as it should be, his brain was fired with exultation, and he defied his soul and swore that the book, for which he had pawned his self-respect, was worthwell worth—the price that he had This was in Marian's absence.

"Dear!" said she.

Charteris looked up into her eyes. They were filled with a tender, unutterable confidence that thrilled him like physical cold. "Marian," said "I shall never come he, simply, back."

Her eyes widened a trifle, but she

did not seem to comprehend.

"Have you never wondered," said he, hoarsely, "that I have never kissed you?"

"Yes," she answered. Her voice was emotionless.

yet - yet -" Charteris "And sprang to his feet. "Dear God, how have longed! Yesterday, only yesterday, as I read to you from the verses I had made to other women, those women that are but pale, colorless shadows by the side of your stanch, vivid beauty—and you listened wonderingly and said the proper things and then lapsed into dainty boredom-how I longed to take you in my arms, and quicken your calm Philistine blood with my kisses! You knew—you must have known! Did you sleep last night?" he queried, a sharp note in his voice.

"No," said she, dully.

"Nor I. All night I tossed in sick, fevered dreams of you. I am mad for love of you. And yet only once have I kissed—your hand. Dear God, your hand!" His voice quavered, effectively.

"Yes," said she; "I remember."

"I have struggled; I have conquered this madness—for madness it is. We can laugh together and be excellent friends—no more. We have laughed, have we not, dear, a whole Summer through? Now comes the ending. Ah, I have seen you puzzling over my meaning ere this—now follows a laugh."

She smiled, stupidly.

"For we can laugh together—that is all. We are not mates. You were born to be the wife of a strong man and the mother of his clean-blooded children, and you and your sort will inherit the earth and make the laws for us poor weaklings who dream and scribble and paint. We are not mates. But you have been very kind to me. I thank you and say good-bye; and I pray that I may never see you after to-day."

There was something of magnificence in the egotism of the man and his complacent deprecation of his artistic temperament; it was a barrier he recognized unquestioningly; and with equal plainness he perceived the petty motives that now caused him to point it out to Marian. His lips

curled half in mockery of himself as he framed the bitter smile he felt the situation demanded; but he was fired with the part he was playing, and half-belief crept into his mind that Marian was created chiefly for the purpose she had already served. He regarded her shrunken form as through the eyes of future readers of his biography. She represented an episode in his life. He pitied her sincerely, and under all, his lower nature, held in leash for two months past, chuckled and grinned and leaped at the thought of a holiday.

She rose to her feet. "Good-bye,"

said she.

"You—you understand, dear?" he

queried, tenderly.

"Yes," she answered; "I understand—not what you have just told me, for in that, of course, you have lied. But I understand you, Jack, dear. Ah, believe me, you are not an uncommon type, a type not strong enough to live life healthily—just strong enough to dabble in life, to trifle with emotions, to experiment with other people's lives. Indeed, I am not angry, Jack, dear; I am only—sorry; and the Summer has been very happy."

IV

CHARTERIS returned to New York and wrote "As the Coming of Dawn."

He spent nine months in this. His work at first was mere copying of the completed book that had already existed in his brain; but when it was transcribed therefrom, he wrote and rewrote, cast and recast each paragraph of the fantastic, jeweled English that had made him the despair of his admirers. It was the work of his life; it was beautiful and strong and clean; and he dandled the child of his brain tenderly for a while and arrayed it in perfect garments and clothed it in words that had a taste in the mouth and would one day lend an aroma to the printed page, and rejoiced shamelessly in that which he had done. Then he went out and sought

the luxury of a Turkish bath, and in the morning, after a rub-down and an ammonia cocktail, awoke to the fact that there were breakfasts in the world that sent forth savory odors and awaited the coming of ravenous humanity.

A week later, he sent for Billy Woods and informed him that he, Charteris, was a genius: waved certain type-written pages to demonstrate the fact. He added, as an afterthought, that he was a cad. Subsequently, he read divers portions of "As the Coming of Dawn" aloud, and Mr. Woods sipped Chianti of a rare flavor and listened.

"Look here!" said Mr. Woods, suddenly; "have you seen 'The Imperial Votaress'?"

Mr. Charteris frowned petulantly.

"Don't know the lady," said he. "She's advertised on half the posters in town," said Mr. Woods. "And it's the book of the year. And it's your

Mr. Charteris laid down his manuscript. "I beg your pardon?" said

"Your book," repeated Mr. Woods, firmly; "scarcely a hair's difference between them, except in the names."

"H'm!" observed Mr. Charteris, in a careful voice. "Who wrote it?"

"Marian Winwood," said Mr. Woods.

"Eh?" said Mr. Charteris.

sounds familiar, somehow."

"Dear me!" remonstrated Billy. "Why, she wrote 'A Bright Particular Star,' you know, and 'The Acolytes,' and—and lots of others." Billy is not literary in his tastes.

The author of "As the Coming of

Dawn" swallowed a glass of Chianti at

a gulp.

Of course," said he, slowly, "I can't, in my position, run the risk of being charged with plagiarism."

Thereupon, he threw the manuscript into the open fire, which his thin blood and love of the picturesque rendered necessary, even in May.

"Oh, look here!" cried Billy, catching up the papers. "It-it's infernally good, you know! Can't youcan't you fix it—change it a bit?"

Mr. Charteris took the manuscript and replaced it firmly among the embers. "As you justly observe," said he, "it is infernally good. It is much better than anything else I shall ever write."
"Why, then—" said Billy.

"Why, then," said Mr. Charteris, "the only thing that remains to do is to read 'The Imperial Votaress.'"



AN OPEN QUESTION

THE band around his Summer hat he lent her for a belt; So when she gave it back again he saw the little welt Her buckle had inflicted, and he whispered, bending low. "If I but look on this, dear one, your measure I shall know."

With just the least suspicion of annoyance in her pout, "Is that the only way," she said, "you have of finding out?" HELEN CHAUNCEY.

HE who never smiles should not on that account consider himself the centre of gravity.



AN APPOINTMENT

By Catharine Young Glen

THE GRAMERCY,
GRAMERCY PARK.

Y DEAR MR. BLUNT:
It was impossible for me to meet you yesterday. I am very sorry! Will leave all explanations till I see you.

Sincerely yours,

CECILIA VAIL.

November the nineteenth.

Blunt sat at his desk in the office on Nassau street, that morning, with the dainty missive, just opened, in his hand. If he bore the marks of having passed a sleepless night, it was not from dissipation. The cause was, briefly, this: He had had an engagement to dine, on the previous evening, with the young lady whose name was signed to the note, and, by one of those maccountable tricks of which the mind is sometimes guilty, had forgotten it.

Nothing, in years, had so disturbed him. A hundred times, if once, had he reviewed the matter, striving both to get the clue to his inexplicable blunder and, most naturally, to find for it a possible excuse. His memory, now unnecessarily active, was able to call up a wealth of detail. It was just ten days ago when he made the appointment, as he sat with Miss Vail in the little parlor in Gramercy Park. He could remember, to the shadows the lamp cast upon it, the dress she wore and, still more accurately, the changes of her pretty face. He remembered—that he could forget anything with which she was connected!—her very words, and his.

They had been speaking of a certain restaurant on the East Side, much visited by the novelty-seeker. Miss

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Vail had never been there, and they were both young enough to be enthusiastic over such things. He had offered to take her at his first opportunity, which had happened to be the evening in question, and they were to meet at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, at six, the place most convenient for her as she came from a previous engagement.

This, their intended sally into bohemia, had been down in his mental calendar ever since as one of the bright spots ahead. When he now asked himself what could have driven it from his mind, he had nothing to set over against the question but a Was it the awful rush of blank. yesterday? the fact that he had bungled that important errand in the morning? that he had been bothered with that Fraternity matter in the afternoon? Of one thing only he was certain—that the fact remained. had eaten his dinner at the usual place and in the usual solitary way, without an inkling of the little tragedy in which, by so doing, he was playing the leading part.

Through the long night hours that elapsed between the moment when his sin of omission first dawned on him and daylight, he had tortured himself with conjectures as to what her attitude might now be toward him, and with conflicting resolves. His regard for truth and his desire to keep, if possible, her good opinion warred within him. What should he do? Action of some kind was a necessity. Invent an excuse? Tell a falsehood? A dozen eagerly suggested themselves. He might have been de-

tained, unable to send word, taken suddenly ill. She would never know, in all probability, and would continue to respect him as before. But he? The shuttlecock came back again. He would know, and what about respecting himself?

Own up to it? Tell her just how it was? She was high-strung and sensitive, as he knew her, dear little thing! "An awful rush of business," "worry," "unexpected matters coming up." It sounded all very well as he said it—but to her ears? Blunt turned over and punched his pillow to a shapeless heap. With a woman it is fatal to forget!

The morning, however, had brought determination and an aching head. There was no way out like the right way. He would tell the truth. He had taken his place in the office with the explanation and plea, which he intended writing and sending to her, already half-framed. And now, after all his fevered tossings and the bitter, if virtuous, solution wrung from the problem, had come this letter.

"It was impossible for me to meet you yesterday." She herself was not there! Pushing away the papers from before him, despite the fact that the other clerks were bending busily above their desks, he tilted back his chair. "Luck?" screamed one of the voices suddenly beating about his ears. "Was there ever such a piece of luck?"

He read and re-read the little letter, holding it with hands that were not quite steady; then, crushing it back into the envelope, tossed it from him and returned to work with a frowning brow. His gray eyes were obstinate and his jaw was set. But the deeds and mortgages on which he strove to concentrate attention were written over with the wording of the note. His head began to throb again, persistently, and the glare from the skylight made everything seem blurred.

Miss Vail stood alone at one of the windows overlooking Gramercy Park. Behind her the noon sun reveled in a mass of chrysanthemums in a vase on the mantel-shelf, played with a paper-cutter on the table and made a quivering oblong on the floor. Before her the trees spread out their maze of branches, each twig bare and motionless. She held the tassel of the curtain in her hand, twirling it idly. Her eyes, sweet and serious, gazed down into the square.

There was a rap on the door and she started, having been too much occupied with her thoughts to hear the footstep. To her, "Come in!" a servant entered, one of the maids employed about the house, with an envelope in her hand. "A note, miss," the maid explained, "and the boy is waiting down-stairs in the hall. I told him I would bring it up, as I was coming. There is to be an answer, he says."

The girl went forward and took the letter, glancing quickly at the address. She folded it, drawing it back and forth between her fingers, a faint color showing on her cheek.

"There is to be an answer," she repeated, "and the boy is waiting? Very well, Mary; I am much obliged. You are going back again, you say? Would you mind telling him that I will see him?" She seated herself beside the table. "The answer will be ready in a minute. I will take it down."

The maid nodded and went out, closing the door behind her, and after she had gone the girl sat with elbow on the table and chin on her palm, the letter, unopened, in her lap. She was glad to be alone; her breath was wont to come a little quickly, of late, at sight of that familiar writing. She had never known, perhaps, how much it did mean to her—until just now. A curious expression, as though it might have been unwillingness, played upon her face. She lifted the envelope, tapping it; then, with a sudden resolute motion, caught up the paper-cutter, and with a slip of its edge the boldly written sheet was in her hands.

90 NASSAU STREET.

MY DEAR MISS VAIL:
Do I need say that I was disappointed

not to see you? But spare yourself those explanations. Your word that it was im-

possible is enough.

I have fixed a penalty, however. Meet me to-day at the same hour and place. Please say "yes" by the messenger. You can't refuse. As always,

> Yours, Sylvester Blunt.

The patch of sun on the floor crept forward; a clock above the mantel ticked loudly on. The little figure still leaned on the table. She seemed to have forgotten that the boy waited below.

There was a sudden rustle of her gown, the quick scrape of a chair, as she took her place before the desk. She tried the point of a gold pen and pulled toward her a sheet of paper, stamped with a dainty monogram, bending above it while the sun paled and a few flakes of the first snow whirled, unheeded, by the window. The chrysanthemums, looking over her shoulder, read:

THE GRAMERCY,
GRAMERCY PARK.

DEAR Mr. BLUNT:
Your note is just received. I shall indeed

spare myself, and you, all further explanations. I waited for you at the Fifth Avenue, yesterday, from six until after seven.

I am sorry, but until I can place the same reliance on your word——

She stopped, struck by something in the unfinished sentence. Could she finish it, indeed! His word? If he, perhaps, had not placed quite so much reliance on her own! She laid down the pen and looked hard ahead of her. It was the first him that she had seen

the matter from his side.

Pulled by her ruthless fingers, petal after petal of the flower that leaned down farthest dropped on the blotter. She was about to sit in judgment on him for the truth. Was there no apology, in that same light, which he might demand of her? She pushed the falling petals into patterns. She had weighed him in the balance and he had been found wanting—but could she cast it up to him?

She tore up the sheet on which she

had written, and took another.

"Come up to-night, instead," she wrote in answer to his letter, "and we will have a talk."



SUCCUMBED

WHEN first I looked in those brown eyes
I felt we'd soon be one,
The strong attachment of my life
Was then and there begun.

Those ivory teeth, the parting lips
No man before had kissed,
All drew me with a mighty strength
Which I could not resist.

And yet, alas for me, I knew My suit was hopeless, quite; The one who held me captive was Her father's bulldog, "Bite."

28

OVE ignores time, and time kills love. It's one of the revenges.

SONG OF SELIM'S SWORD

DEEP in the ancient bosom of earth
The marvelous ore that gave me birth
For ages slumbered, awaiting the flower
Of the perfect and predestined hour
When, fused by the vital force of fire,
I should shape to a thing for man's desire.

By many a hand was I gripped and swung Where the press of battle raged and rung; And ever, although my gleam was fair, Death hovered where I was poised in air; But I never tasted the wine of bliss Till Selim grasped me and claimed me his.

At his touch am I like the lightning made, And the fiercest foemen flee, afraid; Deeply his vengeance-lust I slake; Safely he sleeps, for I ever wake; And I kindle and thrill with more than pride When he clasps me tightly and calls me bride!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



HE WOULD MAKE A FEINT

PLAYWRIGHT—The star's fainting scene isn't realistic enough.

MANAGER—All right; I'll soon fix that. Just when she's going on I'll give her her two weeks' notice.



HANDICAPPED

MADGE—How is it you're not going out yachting with Charlie again?

Dolly—It took both his hands to manage the boat.



T takes all kinds of a world to make some people.

THE YOUTHFULNESS OF WILKINS

By Emery Pottle

KNOWLEDGE of what the young call life, and what clergymen and elderly leaders of society call the world, is, without doubt, an excellent thing. Under what guise this knowledge shall disport itself is entirely a matter of taste and depends, naturally, on the use to which this valuable acquisition is put.

There is little doubt that Penfield Wilkins possesses more than a modicum of those delicate bits of information regarding the vices and devices of mankind—or, to put it briefly, he

knows women.

Miss Wilson has insisted—until recently—that Penfield Wilkins is gifted with a refinement of intuition and a depth of emotion that are almost feminine. And both of these traits, roughly catalogued under the head of tenderness, Miss Wilson declares, endear a man to a woman.

At any rate, when Wilkins began to be known about town he conducted himself in a light-hearted way and on most occasions displayed an infectious gaiety of spirits that won the hearts of women who like amusement-and there are no others worth mentioning and attracted most men. Whether or not it was, and is, a pose is neither here Nowadays, it is generally nor there. conceded that a good pose is far more desirable than an offensive natural-

Miss Wilson, who is much older than Wilkins, took him about with her everywhere—at least, everywhere she was invited—as her protégé, and it is she who named him "the Child."

Wilkins's appearance at least is

not deceitful. He is a slight fellow, of little more than medium height, with a mass of reddish hair and a face that in repose is commonplace, but becomes almost handsome when smiling, and Wilkins smiles frequently. He affects an epigrammatic speech and spends much time in thinking out new combinations of old proverbs. Modern conversation, being made up chiefly of indelicate references to women with a present and men with a past, together with some unimportant criticisms of recent literature and the weather, affords an agreeable opportunity for neat perversions.

But, after all, Penfield Wilkins's most potent charm is his boyish en-He looks three-and-twenty thusiasm. and acts nineteen. When pressed closely by kindly men or women with eligible daughters, as to whether he is as young as he seems, he is wont to smile ingenuously. Those who know him best-and, according to all evidences, they are his entire list of acquaintances—assert that he is a full twenty-nine, and only wishes to appear engagingly youthful as an excuse for his fin-de-siècle wit and a protection from husbands. This last is probably an assailable bit of information and may be taken for what it

is worth.

After Penfield Wilkins had been in New York a twelvemonth or so, he became, as we have said, the suite of Miss Wilson, an unattached lady of perhaps forty-five. With the manner of this occurrence we have no concern—though it is well enough known that, after failing to induce old Moneypenny to enter on marriage for the fourth time, she felt the need of a new environment.

They were to be seen together at every house. Miss Wilson usually arrived with him very late, having an eye to her "entrances." If the function was stupid, they flirted with each other; if there was good hunting and the prospect of a lively chase, they separated and brought down what chance put in their way.

Miss Wilson is possessed of a phenomenal ability to read aright the minds—or, at any rate, the actions of men and women, especially "the Child's." She grows always with her face to the sun—which to her is society. Hence, up to the time of this story, she was able to hold Wilkins to her side with little fear of his defection.

Elizabeth Grant Torrington—who, after all, ought to know-maintains firmly that, though Wilkins says very little of his ethical possessions, he is endowed with an active conscience and a nice perception that the public does not allow itself to be damned, and inquires with extreme frankness and even impertinence into the life that every one elects to live—whether it be his own or one that is stolen or borrowed. The conscience, she asserts, he deluded himself into thinking he had strangled; the perception certainly became somewhat dulled, and this was another reason why Miss Wilson held him.

The season moved on with complacency and scandal. Penfield Wilkins, in the pride of his youth, moved on with it. In late January the Whitestones gave their studio-dance. Why the Whitestones gave the name studio to the large, somewhat batteredlooking room wherein they hold all their evenings—not to mention mornings and luncheons and other little affairs of Mrs. Whitestone's which do not admit of a name-no one ever The avocations of neither Whitestone justify the possession of a studio.

Penfield had come late, as usual, with Miss Wilson. After a few unnecessary words with Mrs. Whitestone

and an epigram to the effect—with a childlike glance at Whitestone and the punch—that the early worm spoils the broth, he wandered over to an inevitable Turkish corner and began to converse vivaciously with Euphemia Van Corliss.

She had just had a spirited passage at arms with Mrs. Whitestone over the possession of a disreputably rich gentleman, who was noted, among other things, for his excellent dinners. Mrs. Whitestone had borne him away in triumph and Euphemia Van Corliss

was in a temper.

"My dear," said she, sipping her punch, "how tiresome of the Whitestones to have claret-punch. I loathe it. Dear Clara, she's so occupied trying to live down her good reputation, I dare say she hasn't time to think of sustenance. So cheer me up with a bit of gossip. Child, where have you been lately, and, oh, my dear, between ourselves, don't you think poor Clara Whitestone's face is getting extremely dilapidated?"

"Dear Mrs. Van Corliss," laughed Wilkins, "what charity for their sisters do I behold among women! Now, I should have said it was merely par-

tially restored."

"Penfield, you are too dreadful, really! How can you think of these clever things? And it's really true; I'll tell Van that you——"

At this point Miss Wilson beckoned to the Child. As he rose to go to her, Mrs. Van Corliss—an amiably insistent person of twenty-five—detained him with a sweetly confidential air.

"Penfield!"

"Mrs. Van Corliss!"

"Are you really going to?"

"What?"

"Marry her?"

"Marry whom?"

"Stupid, tell me!" "My dear Mrs. Van Corliss, tell what?"

"Every one says you are."

"Are what?"

"Why, going to marry Lucy Wil-

"Good heavens, no!" For a mo-

ment Penfield Wilkins lost his youth. He recovered himself instantly. His boyish laugh bubbled forth quite irresistibly.

"Why, Mrs. Van Corliss, I'm a poor young chap struggling for place and I can afford only the necessities of life."

Euphemia Van Corliss looked unconvincedly at him as he departed. Certain little nuances of talk are sometimes lost on her.

"Child," bubbled Lucy Wilson, "come to meet a lovely lady. beth Grant Torrington, may I present Mr. Wilkins? You may call him 'the Child'; we all do.'

Miss Wilson told Whitestone six

months later that she felt at the time she was making a mistake to bring those two people together. And when that lady confesses to a mistake you may be sure she regards it as no whit less than a cardinal sin.

"So you are the man I hear so much about wherever I go?" Elizabeth Torrington looked at Wilkins with cool, deep-brown eyes, wherein twinkled a spark of amusement. "So you are the Child? Who gave you that name? No, don't tell me; I don't care to know."

So you are Elizabeth Grant Torrington? Who gave you that name? No, don't tell me; to speak of one's parents at the Whitestones' is ostentatious."

Penfield Wilkins threw back her speech at her with an audacious air And Miss Torrington of juvenility. laughed. After that they were excellent friends. Indeed, Miss Wilson was compelled twice that evening to break up their comfortable tête-à-têtes. Euphemia Van Corliss told the disreputably rich gentleman—whom she had captured on the rebound—that evidently Elizabeth Grant Torrington was either fooling or being fooled; which remark, though comprehensively covering the major part of all human relations, did not smack of great originality to her companion.

That night in her bedroom, Elizabeth Torrington scrutinized her face in the mirror for a long time. "Not bad to look at, Elizabeth," she soliloquized, calmly, and began to braid her brown hair for the night. In truth, she was right.

As she was dropping off to sleep she murmured, "I wonder how old he is,

really!"

Within two weeks' time Elizabeth Torrington and Penfield Wilkins were to be seen together constantly. He sent her violets daily; she wore them. They walked together, talked together, laughed together. You may be sure that what Whitestone, with his genial mediocrity, called "the bunch," entirely conversant with the situa-Miss Wilson was kept aware of the cream of it. "My dear Lucy," asserted Euphemia Van Corliss over a friendly cup of tea, "I am perfectly certain he is in love with her. He is not so guileless as he seems. Did you see the way he looked at her at the Martins' last night?"

Lucy Wilson, having both seen and heard at the Martins' more than she desired, answered, "No," in a short

tone, and went home.

The Whitestones inclined to the belief—they were under somewhat deep obligations to Miss Wilson—that Miss Torrington was foolishly enamoured of young Wilkins. In payment for this sop of comfort they received tickets to Miss Wilson's Tuesday musicale.

What conversation on the delicate subject took place between Miss Wilson and the Child has nothing to do

with this story.

It is to be supposed that Miss Torrington knew her own mind on the question of Penfield Wilkins; at any rate, she kept her own counsel and,

as far as possible, her head.

"You understand perfectly, Penfield," said she, luminously, one day in the Park; "this is a game we are playing —a nice game, a Spring game. No, don't answer me in epigram," she continued, as Wilkins essayed to speak; "I hate epigrams, except my own."

Penfield sat silent for several minutes, poking the dirt with his Games result in large scores sometimes, Elizabeth—old scores to be paid off, or new scores to stand white and accusing on the blackboard."

"My dear, you are far too young to talk of old scores; as for new ones, poul! the next girl discreetly wipes them out. I trim my vestal lamp for discretion in other people."

He nearly lost his temper for a mo-

ment.

"You annoy me when you call me young in that tone. I'm not young."

Elizabeth laughed, delightedly. "You are, you are, you prove it. Every one says you are; you look it, you act it. You're even called 'the Child.'"

Wilkins emitted a soft, sibilant oath between his teeth. "Can you never take me seriously? I am not so young."

"Seriously? What are you, seriously,

Penfield?"

No man can tell a woman what he is, seriously. On self-analysis, neither an angel nor a devil can live up to a reputation.

Penfield Wilkins hesitated and was

tritely lost.

In many ways the Spring was delightful. Apart from such inconsequent dialogues as the foregoing, the two had an unaffectedly gay companionship. Indeed, Miss Wilson left for Tuxedo in a rage at both of them.

As the Summer days began to approach, the town was bereft of society and empty houses stood in somnolent rows, quite content in shuttered respectability. But Elizabeth Torrington stayed on. Wilkins was seen

with her constantly.

"It's a perfect shame," wrote Mrs. Whitestone—who had stayed in town to secure a divorce, with alimony, from Whitestone—to Lucy Wilson. Since she did not specify wherein lay the particular shamelessness, Miss Wilson drew her own benevolent conclusions and invited the Child to come to Newport with her in August.

One hot evening in June, Penfield Wilkins took Miss Torrington for a

ride through the Park in a hansom. It was a favorite pastime of theirs.

"I go to the shore to-morrow," said

she, suddenly.

"Yes, Elizabeth." Wilkins answered slowly, with the careful, even tone of a man holding an emotion in leash. "Yes, Elizabeth." He looked out absently at black, shapeless masses of foliage, through which an impalpable mist quivered about the electric lights. It seemed to him like a picture of his mind. "Yes, Elizabeth," he said, a third time.

His tongue seemed disconnected from his brain and wagged on foolishly. His brain was too busy to stop it.

The light fell on his face as the cab

passed a lamp.

"Why, Penfield, you look almost old." Elizabeth laughed, a little

nervously.

"Listen, Penfield," she continued, hastily, "it's been awfully dear of you thus to play with me for so long. We've flirted outrageously; every one has talked about us. But—but you see I've been so perfectly sure of you all the time. You're such an awfully nice boy; so good-natured, so funny, and so—so—so—"

"Young, Elizabeth."

"Yes, so nice—and young. I knew you weren't — well, serious — and I trusted you. You see, you're the kind of man a girl feels like trusting—you don't do horrid things. And I've seen that you liked me in just the jolly, happy way I like you. Did you speak?"

"No, Elizabeth."

"And—and—well, I knew you understood. You did understand, didn't you, Penfield? Didn't you?" There was a sharp, almost frightened note in her voice.

Penfield Wilkins hesitated. His brain was beating against the sides of his head one moment and then slipping numbly down long, gray spaces the next. How foolishly those moths beat against that electric light, he thought. This was Elizabeth with him in the cab, of course; he was Penfield Wilkins. He understood that.

"Didn't you?"

His tongue took up its monotonous

wagging. "Yes, Elizabeth."

"I knew it. Oh, for a minute I was almost afraid you—you—might have cared—cared, really! I'm a little nervous to-night, I think. But you didn't; I'd hate to have you think that I am a heartless thing—a—a—horrid flirt. You see, I am so sure of you, Penfield. Penfield?"

"Yes."

"I want to tell you something."

"Yes, Elizabeth." Would that

tongue never stop!

"I'm—I'm engaged to be married—I'm engaged." She bestowed an improvidently happy smile upon darkness. Then she turned, poutingly.

"You don't ask who it is. Don't

you care, at all?"

Wilkins's strong walking-stick broke in his hand. He did not notice it, un-

til the pieces fell.

"Elizabeth, Elizabeth! I—I—Elizabeth, can't you see, I—" His voice quivered with more than the enthusiasm of youth. "I—" He stopped short.

The hansom jolted along amiably; the driver swore a cordial greeting to a passing fellow. In that brief moment much of importance passed through Penfield Wilkins's mind. The character of it may be interpreted as you choose.

"Elizabeth Grant Torrington," he began again, "I congratulate you, honestly." The tone was delightfully gay and debonair. "Who is the

fortunate fellow?"

"Dear Penfield!" She laid her hand affectionately on his. "You're a dear boy, and he's John Holland. You've heard of him. He's in London, now."

"You are a delightful girl, Elizabeth, and Holland, I'm sure, believes himself unworthy of you. Were there

another in the world like you, Elizabeth, I should reconsider my recent vow of celibacy. Let's pass on lightly to our next subject."

A little chill wind crept against them. It depressed her unreason-

ably.

"Elizabeth, if you don't mind, I'd like to go back. I've a ripping headache." Penfield Wilkins sighed—it seemed a very weary sigh.

The ride home was almost a silent one. Silence is not often the golden

thing the proverb declares it.

"I wish you'd not see so much of Lucy Wilson next season," Miss Torrington burst out, as they neared home. "People laugh at you and talk, Penfield—talk dreadfully."

"Very well, I'll be a good—boy,

my dear friend."

The cab clattered up to Miss Tor-

rington's door.

"Good night, Penfield, and au revoir. I'll see you in the Autumn again. And, Penfield—you're a dear!"

"Elizabeth Grant Torrington, I—bid you au revoir. You and I have played a nice game; there are no scores to pay—for you. Good night."

Elizabeth lingered on the steps, half embarrassedly. "How tired and old

you look, Penfield!"

"Nonsense, Elizabeth, it's my crabbed youth without make-up that you behold."

She turned impatiently. "Oh, do try to seem as old as you ought to be, Penfield! Good night."

"Where to, sir?" asked the cabby. "Feeling sick, sir?" as Penfield Wilkins leaned somewhat weakly against the wheel.

A touch of the old smile flickered on Wilkins's face. "Sick? No; only the well dare to admit they are sick, cabby. Drive me to the Fountain of Youth."



REASON is a flower seldom found growing in the Garden of Love.

PERNICIOUS PRIDE

THERE once was a Seal who couldn't conceal A churlish, invidious pride
In the fit of his coat, and he'd constantly gloat
O'er his fellows who swam in the tide.

But his pride had a fall when, one day, a Narwhal Observed: "You've no collars or cuffs!"
The Seal made retort, with a vigorous snort:
"Young feller, don't give me no bluffs."

Then he walked down the shore for an hour or more Until he came up with a Man,
To whom he remarked—or, more properly, barked—"Will you give me some cuffs if you can?"

The Man said he could, aye, in fact, that he would, And sidled up close to the Seal.

"I'll give you a cuff that will prove quite enough—A cuff which I think you will feel."

Without more ado, near the Seal the Man drew
And dealt him a vigorous cuff
With a hard, knotted club. And the skin of that cub
Is now being worn as a muff!

ALBERT LEE.



THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING IS IN NOT EATING

YOU can hardly persuade Miss Oldgirl that marriage is not a failure."
"Why? She never did marry."
"But she tried to and failed!"



NOT NOVEL

HE-Do you read fiction during the Summer? SHE-No; I listen to it.



A FRESH fallacy is often more pleasing than a twice-told truth.

NEWPORT, THE APOSTLE OF ESTHETICISM

By Douglas Story

THE American is emphatically a gregarious animal. He dreads a desert, detests solitude, abhors the wilderness. If he would be literary, he congregates with others in a Brook Farm; if he would be religious, he founds a Salt Lake City; if he would be industrious, he uprears a skyscraping Chicago. Most significantly of all, if he would be recuperated, he withdraws to a Newport.

This national love of a crowd argues no phenomenal sociability of the American people. England, dappled with country houses; France, with its widely scattered châteaux; Germany, with its schlosses and hunting lodges; each in its own way is as hospitable as It is not so much the United States. the desire for intercourse with their fellows that influences the Americans in their aggregation. It is the need of others constantly within hail—the sentiment in an adult generation that makes the timorous child shriek aloud in the darkness. A nervous nation. they cannot bear to be alone.

And so it comes that they have builded themselves by the ocean a retreat that has not its like in the world. They have raised themselves a city of palaces, and have called it a village of cottages, striving thereby to give a rustic veneer to a society that is esthetic as anything in the cities. They have taken the bluff summits of cliffs, have rolled them, and turfed them, and laid trim lawns upon them. They have seized upon a wind-swept plateau, and have planted there a garden of the tropics. They have transmogrified rough country roads into smooth driving paths and leafy avenues. They have chosen a village of fishermen and farmers, and have made of it a Newport, a Mecca of fashion, a hermitage for millionaires, a wonderful urbs in rure. They have fetched thither the art of every age, of every clime, to embellish a strip of New England seaboard. And the effect is a kaleidoscope of styles that first shocks, then interests, finally enthralls the alien beholder.

Jerkily over the cobblestones of the village, smoothly up the other side, one drives from the railway station to Bellevue avenue and the mansions of Newport. On either side, and over through the screenery of trees, are sprinkled the residences—great villas of marble and stucco and brick, set in their patches of shrubbery and grassy lawn.

Nowhere in America is there such green and luscious turf as here in Newport. Were it widespread, as in the parks of England and France, one would be relieved from the sensation of crowding that oppresses the foreigner; but where should be stretched a generous carpet is but a niggardly border, an art-square of lawn in front of the houses. The effect is to make of a concourse of country houses a mere suburb, a cluster of mansions robbed of their proper perspective. Houses that demand a sweep of a mile before them are cramped within a fifty-yard edging of garden. palaces stare stonily through at one from the other side of the fences, denied their due dignity of aspect by reason of their propinquity. Gateways that should frame long vistas give upon a few yards of graveled carriageway, ridiculing their massiveness.

Yet is Newport a marvelously beautiful spot, a place to command the respect of the blase sojourner from Aix or Baden or Cairo. Here are no public hostelries—the curse and the canker of European watering-To visit Newport one must be of Newport, a guest or a cottager. There is no opportunity for the impertinences of tourists, for the social salmagundi of Homburg and Ostende. In the midst of a democracy is here a more rigid class-exclusiveness than anywhere in monarchical Europe. The American aristocracy has hedged itself about with a formality as impenetrable as any patent of an Old World nobility. It has sought a retreat for itself, and has made millions the price of entry. No chance comer can buy a week's or a night's admission as he can at Monte Carlo or Brighton. must become a cottager, the head of an establishment. And so is Newport more absolutely American than Deauville is French or Venice Italian. It is built up out of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and, most recently, of the fashionable quarter of Pittsburg. Aliens are as rare as dromedaries on the streets of Newport.

Perched on the highlands above the Atlantic, Newport looks out over bulwark of toy cliffs across a sea as blue as the Mediterranean, to the heat haze on the horizon or the green of the opposing shore of Middletown. It is clean and caller and spray-sprinkled, with the smell of the seaweed in its nostrils and the briny healthfulness of the ocean all about. The lawns of the shoreward cottages stretch to the break of the cliffs and in cozy little coves beneath are the bathing places of the cottagers. In a bigger bight is the place reserved for the bathing of the Four Hundred—so the vulgarians of the village phrase it—a section of God's own coast made over to the exclusive use of the millionaires. Along the lip of the bluff is the cliff walk—a promenade for the cottagers,

the perambulating place of the nurse-maids.

It is all very healthy and sanitary if not strictly Arcadian, with a sort of refined rusticism that tans one's skin under costumes from Worth and Paquin, a kid-gloved pastoralism that retains the respect of the proletariat while benefiting the health of the cottage community. The landscape is rather of Watteau than of Millet, delicately outlined, daintily tinted; but lacking something of the virility of English country life, something of the simplicity of the German, something of the grace of the French. It is American, of the America of Fifth avenue and the Metropolitan Opera House.

But there is another Newport—the Newport of the Ocean Drive, of long automobile rides, of the tennis court and the polo ground. It is in this Newport that the millionaires of the second and third generation gain the manliness that is needed to combat the snobbery inseparable from the exclusiveness of the Newport of cottages. On the polo ground and on the golf-links Young America is maintaining the chivalry, the manly vigor, the self-reliance, that ever have been associated with an Anglo-Saxon aristocracy. Here, in Newport, sport approximates more nearly to the English standard than elsewhere in the United States. It is not so much athletics as exercise that is cultivated: not so much a fierce struggle of warring interests that is indulged in, as a friendly contest between men and women who play the game for the game's sake. Newport as a standard of athletic morals should become a strenuous missionary throughout the States. The gospel of sport has been sadly misread in many of the universities and athletic clubs of America.

Down there in the harbor ride the yachts of the cottagers, a priceless fleet of pleasure vessels. There young America lunches, and dines, and breathes in the ozone of the Atlantic. It is true, costumes are more elaborate than at Kiel or at Cowes, but on

board as elsewhere the democratic aristocracy must still carry its patent of nobility visibly about with it. It is true, the yachts' furnishings, the service, the flowers and the menu are more elaborate than elsewhere has been thought necessary for a seagoing outfit; but where there is money in millions, there is no adequate reason why it should not be expended on the best the world can

supply.

It is not fair to judge the yachts of Newport by the standards of the Solent. Millions are here in place of thousands, and plate were of little more moment to a Newport cottager than delf to a Channel yachtsman. Nor is there much ostentation of wealth on the yachts of American millionaires. Nowhere has the taste of the designer been more apparent than in the equipment of American pleasure vessels. Money has not been spared, because money did not need to be spared; but it is only when the odium of comparison is introduced that one recognizes the outlay on boats that never yet sailed a day's distance out of sight of land. It is on these yachts that the society women of America gain the strength to carry them through the seasonsin town, in London, and on the Riviera—that constitute their year's work. Here, their complexions are involuntarily renovated, their ankles strengthened, their moral force invigorated. So that the American women of the élite are better mothers than the women of France or of the Continent.

The cottages of Newport afford a strange commentary upon the contrasting tastes of the American nation. Their heterogeneity were impossible in a race of settled culture, in a race of common blood, in a country of limited extent. But the United States is a nation of nations. Its people are not Americans, but Englishmen and Scotsmen, Frenchmen and Germans, Italians and Spaniards of the third or fourth or tenth generation. Their taste in architecture is a

taste that was born on the sunny Mediterranean shore, in cozy Normandy orchards, in classic Spain and Italy, in baronial Scotland and England. It is revealed in the châteaux, the castles, the villas, the loggias of Newport. Seville and Welbeck, Florence and Falaise, here stand side by side on the same strip of grass, separated only by a grille from Venice or Antwerp.

To the alien observer this curious variety of styles at first argues a strange lack of settled opinion. But to the student of psychology it represents not so much a want of taste as a vast variety of tastes descended from remote European ancestors. is not so much a manifestation of mimicry as it is the demonstration of hereditary predilections. In time these will coalesce into an American estheticism. But that time is not yet, and in the variety of Newport architectures lies the promise of an art that in the near future will be national, distinctive.

In the interior of the cottages fortunes are displayed in tapestries, carvings, pictures, hangings and bric-àbrac. Here the decorator has been interfered with by the globe-trotting propensities of the American. Carpets from Persia mix indiscriminately with tapestries from medieval bowers, with rugs from Cashmere, with embroidered kakemonos from Peking and Tokio, to yield a palette of color that would delight a Turner, but is a shock to the man of taste and culture. In the more recent houses these freaks of fancy, these accumulations of discordant arts, have given room to a studied simplicity. Cool halls, marble floors sprayed with fountains, green with ferns and illumined with soft light, have given to the best ordered of the Newport cottages the austerity of a Roman villa. Newport is rapidly developing out of the complex into the simple, and with it the whole of the American nation.

The life of Newport is clean, is healthy, is elevating, as is that of none of the European watering-places. It

has fulfilled its purpose as a retreat for the multi-millionaire, has respected his prejudices, has provided his comforts, has cultivated his taste. For the younger generation it has furnished a watering-place free from the demi-mondaine of Europe, immune from the intrusion of the tripper—a place where he can mix with the people of his own class, can lay the foundations of that cultured caste without which no nation is complete. Already Newport has justified her existence. To-morrow she will be an apostle preaching the gospel of health, of sport, of self-respect, of all those qualities which go to the making of a true aristocracy.



PAN

ROISTERERS, vagabonds forever free,
Mendicants, blacksheep, outcasts—what you please—
We singers of the careless melodies,
Great Pan, we make our only prayer to thee.
To thee alone our only hymn shall be,
Save these we sing thine earth and sky, and these
We sing thy nymphs beneath the forest trees,
Till all their pulses thrill in harmony.

Wanderers all, to thee we wander far
And pledge our songs subservient to thy nod;
Finding thy gross, distorted features fair
Because thou only, knowing what we are,
Beneath the brute canst see the hidden god,
Behind the sneer canst read the great despair.

REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN.



THE KEY OF THE SITUATION

HUSBAND—Darling, I'm too tired to go to that dance to-night. Do you mind going alone?

Wife—Why, no. But when I get home where shall I leave the latchkey?



AND HE WAS CRUSTY

FIRST ANT—How was the picnic?
SECOND ANT—Never saw such a crush in my life! Some one sat down on the pie.

AN UNDISTINGUISHED MAN

By Charles W. Westron

CO far as I could see—and I had given the matter some attention—there was only one objection to our being married at once. It was, perhaps, a trifle awkward that the obstacle should happen to be Ulrica herself, for Ulrica was of the essence of the contract. I recognized that, fully, and the occasion was not a particularly favorable one either, yet-

"Tea," I suggested.

"Thanks," said Ulrica, lazily, sinking into a garden-chair with a sigh of relief.

"Bit bored?" I asked.

"A bit," she admitted, handing me her cup, while she withdrew from her hair two long, wicked-looking pins, which fastened her straw hat. "Garwhich fastened her straw hat. den-parties are rather trying."

"That's not a bad backhanded stroke of yours across the court, all the same," I said, in my best patronizing manner, vigorously fanning her the while with the discarded hat.

"Let's move into the shade," she

suggested.

I thought this rather unkind of Ulrica, for the sun had been doing its level best—not unsuccessfully to discover unsuspected tints in her dark hair. I said as much.

"Tennis, too, is rather trying," she

murmured.

"And golf?"

"And golf and ping-pong and dancing and indoor meetings and outdoor greetings and-

"Cycling," I suggested. She had

forgotten cycling.
"A misance!" said Ulrica, with decision. "It's the worst of the lot; besides, my bicycle is geared only to sixty-eight. That's not high enough."

"Is the new curate?" I asked.

new curate is a man of ritual.

"I don't understand," said Ulrica, who did understand. She admires the new curate.

"He is geared up pretty high," I had to explain. I felt aggrieved. Ulrica has no right to admire the new curate, and explanations are horrible things.

"Don't make fun of sacred matters," she said, with admirable stern-

ness.

"I very rarely make fun of you,"

I protested.

I strolled to an enterprising ball, which had rolled in our direction, and impressively pushed it with my toe a few inches nearer the man who wanted I felt confirmed in my opinion. The occasion was not a favorable one. When I returned, Ulrica had shifted her chair within the shadow of an acacia and was reclining with closed eyes.

I proceeded to look penitent. She understands that when I look at my

boots I mean to look penitent.

Ulrica opened her eyes. girl here is wearing a white frock,' she said, in a mournful voice, as one who spoke a solemn truth. Then, overcome by the comprehensiveness of her woe, she closed her eyes once more—the lashes are inclined to be long—and petulantly dug her head into the bulge of the canvas chair.

I looked at her, approvingly. looked, it occurred to me that she, too, was wearing a white frock.

are wearing a white frock," I ventured to remark.

"That's different."

"Entirely different." To do her justice, it did seem different. "Your costumes," said I, "are as elusive as they are complete, as complete as they are charming, as charming—""

"Everything is so ordinary," interrupted Ulrica, pointing a coppercolored tennis shoe and gazing at it with strong disapproval. "The garden, the house, the people—all of them eating strawberries—"

"You are eating strawberries,"

murmured, in parenthesis.

"—as if they had never eaten strawberries before," she concluded,

ignoring the murmur.

"The garden and the house seem fairly abstemious," I remonstrated, "and some of the people appear to be eating minute particles of cake."

"I think I shall walk down to the bridge," said Ulrica, forbiddingly.

But, as it chanced, I, too, thought I would walk down to the bridge.

The path to the bridge is rather a pretty path. It runs through a little wood, which possesses all the proper accessories to a little wood. There is shade and there are flowers—foxgloves, woodbine and dog-roses—and there are ferns and there are other things. But the chief glory of the wood is the stream, and spanning the stream is the bridge itself, small, yet serviceable, with ornamental trelliswork at the sides for the pleasing of artistic sensibilities.

All this I pointed out to Ulrica.

"From the giddy height of four feet," I said, by way of peroration, "we can gaze into the fast-flowing torrent and think great thoughts."

"And talk great nonsense."

"To indulge in abuse is not a mark of distinction," I said, reprovingly.

"I don't pretend to be distinguished. I'm only a little girl," she replied, with irritating demureness. "It is you—you, who should distinguish yourself."

I thought I saw an opening. "To be associated with you," I said, im-

pressively, "will be distinction enough for me."

Ulrica has a knack of varying her attitude conversely with my expectations. On this occasion I was prepared for her to say many things. She said nothing. That, of itself, perhaps, was not unpropitious; but she laughed—that was. I abandoned the opening.

"One might write a book," I said, after a long pause, during which I hurriedly reviewed my resources.

Ulrica did not seem impressed. "A great and good book," I hastened to add, reassuringly.

"And dedicate it to me?"

"Naturally I should dedicate it to

you."

"You might write one of those letter-things," said Ulrica, suddenly fired with enthusiasm. "You know the kind of thing—they look awfully nice. Having regard to the fact that all the best and most beautiful thoughts in the book have sprung from me, to whom, but me, should you dedicate it?"

"To whom, indeed?"

"It puts the whole thing in a nutshell," she said, delightedly.

We walked upon the bridge and

stood looking into the water.

"How would you like something short in big print?" I asked. "'To the sharer of my labors,' for instance?"

On her forehead Ulrica keeps some curls—not ringlets, be it understood, but little waves of fluffiness. On this occasion they shook—decisively.

"Or, 'To my wife!'?"

They stopped shaking. "After all, you haven't written the book," she said, quickly. "There's a trout."

There was not the least doubt about

it. It was a trout.

"A pound, if he's an ounce," I said, gravely.

"But I'm afraid I can't really re-

spect you, Joe!" said Ulrica.

Now we were at that time partly sitting on, partly leaning against, the flimsy side-rail of the bridge, and Ulrica was looking particularly charming. It was, probably, the combination of circumstances that inspired me.

"I've hit it!" I cried, joyfully.

Ulrica looked—not unnaturally—for the trout.

"I'm going to distinguish myself,"

I explained.

"How?" asked Ulrica, doubtfully.

"Going to fall into the stream," I said, with an idiotic grin. The idiotic grin was a feature of the inspiration, but Ulrica did not know that.

"Don't be absurd," she said, in

disgust.

"To be absurd is to be distin-

guished," I argued, plaintively.

A mischievous gleam visited Ulrica's eyes and a smile lurked in her dimples. To make me look foolish is an exercise that has always had a considerable fascination for her. It was on that recollection that the inspiration was based.

"You daren't do it," she said.

"On the contrary, I should like to do it."

"Then do it!" she cried.

I slipped my arm through hers.

"To be with you," I said, "would be delightful under any circumstances."

"Don't be silly," said Ulrica, rather

weakly.

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"Under any circumstances," I repeated, solemnly. Then I leaned well back and, intertwining my legs with a convenient rail, delivered my ultimatum.

"Either we are going to distinguish ourselves, together and immediately, or—" I paused.

"Or what?" gasped Ulrica, nerv-

ously, trying to free her arm.

"—or you are going to promise to marry, within three months, an undistinguished man," I repeated, slowly and distinctly.

"I shall do nothing of the kind," said Ulrica, indignantly. "It's abom-

inable!"

I threw my weight back, and the rails creaked ominously. "Only a few rusty nails between you and fame," I said.

Ulrica temporized. While she was temporizing, one of the rusty nails

gave way.

"Three months," I said, firmly.

Ulrica blushed. While she was blushing, another rusty nail gave way.

"Three months."

"Twelve," whispered Ulrica.

"Three."

The rail started six inches, and it was only by an effort that I recovered my balance.

"Six," she murmured, offering a composition of ten shillings in the

pound.

"Of your own free will?" I asked. It was, perhaps, not altogether an unnecessary thing to ask.

"Of-my-own-free-will."

It appears that, just as I was accepting the composition, the new curate saw us, so we acquired some slight fame, after all.



THE RAINBOW

WHY all these smiles?" I queried,
As she stepped within the hall;
"One would judge the drenching downpour
Didn't trouble you at all."

She tossed her head and answered,

In a very saucy tone,

"Why should it, when the downpour Brought a rain-beau all my own!"

CORA GASKILL ALBERGER.

A MIDSUMMER MEDLEY

THE bumble-bee is haunting
The wild rose far and nigh;
The bullock's blithely flaunting
His tail to hit the fly.

The cricket's wildly fifing
Within the crannied chink;
The Ethiop is knifing
The melon green and pink.

The horsefly skims the milkweed Beside the old stone wall; The spider climbs the silkweed Beneath the buttonball.

The ironweed its pristine Cascade of color throws Along the amethystine Haze-billow as it flows.

In dreams I tap my knob white While perching on a rail, And listen to the Bob White— In other words, the quail;

Yet wot not of the bird's worth
Within its toasted sphere,
But read my ten-cent Wordsworth,
Until with joy I hear

A mad and glad bell ringing, Which brings me off the fence And sends me hashward winging With revelry intense.

And then smiles lovely Phyllis, Until I'm skyward borne, While fluting Amaryllis Upon an ear of corn.

R. K. MUNKITTRICK.



AMENITIES

16 WHAT a pretty suit, my dear! It fits you as if it had been made for you."

THE LOGIC OF CIRCUMSTANCES

By James Hazleton Willard

NE bright March morning, while on my way to our law-offices, it chanced that I met my junior partner, Mr. Howard Freeman, on the elevated train. We fell to discussing the evidently contented expression on the faces of most of our fellow passengers, chiefly business men of the down-town district. versation continued after we had left the train and proceeded toward Broad-

"It is difficult to say who are truly happy," I observed; "it is rarely that I have seen one who could be

pronounced perfectly happy."

"I know a man," remarked Howard, "who is, probably, the happiest person in New York."

"A friend of yours?"

"Yes, one whom you know; my college classmate, Dr. Homer Manson. He has a fair practice as a physician and surgeon. A monograph on pyæmia has made him famous in his profession. His aunt, Miss Sappho Manson, last month made him residuary legatee under her will, by which be will inherit over half a million dol-He is engaged to be married to Miss Lilian Arnold, one of the prettiest and wealthiest girls in the city, and, all in all, one may well deem the doctor the happiest man in-"

"Extra! Extra! All about the murder in Madison avenue. Arrest of

the murderer!"

A newsboy was loudly crying his papers and selling them rapidly.

Howard purchased a paper and

glanced at the head-lines.

"Oh, judge!" he cried, in tones which revealed his distress.

seems hardly possible. Dr. Homer Manson has murdered his aunt and is now in custody."

The New York Daily has a reputation for stating all the facts of any case clearly. Its account of the murder was fairly accurate. Howard read it to me as we stood a little apart on the sidewalk, out of the Following the sensational head-lines came this account:

"Miss Sappho Manson, an estimable and wealthy middle-aged lady, was murdered last night about nine o'clock, in the reception-room of her elegant residence on Madi-son avenue, near Twenty-ninth street. Her favorite nephew, the distinguished young physician, Dr. Homer Manson, called on her at about eight o'clock and was shown by the butler, John Meade, into the reception-room on the opposite side of the hall from the parlor. The latter room is usually unlighted in the evening unless some social function is in progress. Miss Manson's companion, or secretary, as she preferred to call her, Miss Lily Reath, was in the library immediately in the rear of the reception-room and heard part of the conversation between the aunt and nephew. With the exception of a quarrel regarding a lady, this conversation was carried on in ordinary tones for nearly an hour, at which time Miss Reath thought farewell greet-But, suddenly, the ings were exchanged. conversation became louder, the voice of Miss Manson being raised in tones of reproach. The subject under discussion was a will that Miss Manson had recently executed. This will left nearly all her property to this nephew. The secretary had never known her mistress to be so excited on any previous occasion. The clock struck nine while this conversation was going on. At last, Miss Manson cried out, 'I will not do it. I will never do it!' Then there was a noise that indicated a struggle, and a stifled cry; then all was

"Miss Reath, not desiring to interfere in any family quarrel, waited a few moments for further developments and then went into the hall, just in time to see the front door closing upon a man who slammed it violently. This man was of medium height, well dressed and wearing a light Spring overcoat and a derby hat. Miss Reath could not positively identify this person, as she did not see his face, but she believes he was Dr. Homer Manson, as the figure was of about his size, and the overcoat and hat were similar to those worn

by the doctor.
"The door between the hall and the reception-room was open. Miss Reath went toward it and, looking into the room, saw the body of her mistress lying on the floor. She made an outcry, and the servants, four in number, quickly assembled. Miss Manson's skull was fractured by a blow on the right side of the head, and blood was flowing over the carpet from a wound in the left side, and still remaining in this wound was a white-handled scalpel which had pierced the lady's heart. This scalpel, which was broken in the middle, was afterward identified as belonging to Dr. Manson. In the murdered lady's right hand was a silk scarf, a little soiled and of a peculiar pattern, which was also recognized as belonging to the doctor. On the floor was found a large button which was of the same pattern as those on the doctor's

"Meade was despatched to the police station in West Thirtieth street, but it was some time before the police reached the The indications as to the criminal were so clear as to leave no doubt in their minds concerning the perpetrator of the crime. Police Sergeant McIntire and Patrolman Murphy went to the doctor's rooms, but he was not there. A young man who attended the office, James Carroll, said the doctor had returned shortly before, but had almost immediately left for his club. The sergeant went to the Culture Club, but found that the doctor had remained there only a few minutes. The club and the rooms were both watched, and at half-past two o'clock this morning Dr. Manson was arrested as he was about to enter his rooms. He was wearing a derby hat, and a button was missing from his light Spring overcoat. He was unable to account for the missing button and claimed not to have observed its loss previously.

'Asked if he had a white-handled scalpel, he answered in the affirmative and opened a small case of instruments that he took from his overcoat pocket, but failed to find

the scalpel.
"He professed great grief at the murder of his aunt, but solemnly asserted his innocence of the crime. He refused, however, to make any statement except under advice of counsel, and the sergeant judged that his manner was that of a guilty man who had started to flee, after the commission of the

crime, and then returned to face the con-

The police are to be greatly commended for the rapidity and secrecy with which the arrest was made. None of the newspapers had any knowledge of the crime before they went to press. The high standing of Dr. Manson in his profession and the prominence of the murdered lady promise to make this case one of the most sensational of recent years.

"Howard, my dear boy, I am sorry for you," I said, as my partner ceased

"Sorry! What do you mean, judge?" Howard asked, with a puz-

zled look.

"Can you not see, if this account is really a statement of facts, there is no escape for your friend? He will most certainly sit in the electric chair."

"You say that because you do not know him," rejoined Howard. "While he is cold, even stern in his manner, and unpopular, he could never have committed such a crime. certainly explain matters satisfac-This account is probably a torily. tissue of falsehoods woven by the police to prejudice the public mind."

We proceeded to our offices and found Mr. Virgil Manson, a cousin of the doctor's, pacing the floor of Mr. Miller's room—the latter gentleman had not yet reached his office. Manson had come to our offices, at his cousin's urgent request, for the purpose of employing our firm, and stated that Dr. Manson was especially anxious to see Mr. Miller and Mr. Freeman.

It appeared, from Mr. Virgil Manson's conversation, that the newspaper account was substantially correct, and he professed himself unable to throw any light on the matter. He expressed his belief in his cousin's innocence; one reason for this being that he had met the doctor at the Culture Club at about half-past nine o'clock the previous evening, and his manner had been perfectly natural, although he had seemed a little overheated from fast walking. Mr. Virgil Manson bewailed the disgrace that would attach to the family on account of the murder.

When Mr. Miller arrived the facts were briefly stated to him, and he accompanied Mr. Manson and Mr. Free-

man to the police station.

The Manson family had been clients of the firm of Hazleton & Parsons for many years. Michael Manson, the founder of the family, had emigrated from England toward the close of the last century and had made a fortune as a fur-dealer. He left one son, Thomas Manson, who had increased the family property by slow accumulations and the purchase of real estate. This gentleman imagined himself to be a poet and had written what he termed an epic. He had left three sons and one daughter, the murdered woman, Miss Sappho Manson. These sons were all dead, but each had left one son, bearing, in each case, the father's name. These cousins, Homer, Virgil and Milton Manson, were all unmar-Dr. Homer Manson, the successful physician, was of medium height, clean-shaven, with light-gray eyes, a high forehead and dark hair. His appearance was that of a reserved, cold, self-reliant and studious man. It was claimed, in the days when he attended the medical college, that he was the wildest boy in his class and especially callous, jesting grimly amid the mangled remains of the subjects in the dissecting-room and sometimes indulging in weird practical jokes. On one occasion he had scared a fellow-student almost out of his senses, by attaching a wire to the hand of a corpse so that it struck the student who was dissecting it. He had settled down, after graduation, but was said to be indifferent to the infliction of pain in his surgical operations. He was noted as a bacteriologist and vivisectionist, and it was asserted that he used no anesthetics when operating on animals.

Mr. Milton Manson was an undersized, insignificant-looking man. He had red hair and beard and, it might be said, red eyes as well, for they were constantly inflamed. He showed the effects of years of dissipation. He was a professional gambler and had

long since squandered the fortune left him by his father. He was now a hanger-on around gambling-hells

and pool-rooms.

Mr. Virgil Manson was much the best looking of the three cousins and by far the most esteemed. He was of medium size, but alert and well formed. His eyes were black, as was also his hair, and he had one of those large, pale, clean-shaven, clear-cut faces which carry the impression of benevolence. He was unusually popular with women, and it was generally supposed that he would inherit the most of his aunt's wealth. He was reported to be fairly successful in his business as a promoter, but was one of those men who, while regarded as quite wealthy, are often pressed for money. I had assisted him several times in financial matters. He was outwardly a philanthropist, being a member of several charitable organizations and the life and soul of them all; but I had always believed that he used these organizations as a means of introduction to wealthy people, with a view of extending his business.

All the nephews had expected to inherit fortunes from their Aunt Sappho and had endeavored to humor her in her whims, which were many. Only a month before her death she had made her will, leaving a thousand dollars to Milton, five thousand to Virgil, and the rest of her estate more than half a million dollars—to Homer. Mr. Miller had drawn her will, and the reasons she assigned for this disposition of her property were these: "Milton is a spendthrift and a gambler, Virgil is a hypocrite, using the cloak of charity to cover his questionable business methods, while Homer, although cold and cruel, is the only one who is any credit to the family." Mr. Miller suggested that such a disposition of her property might lead to a contest over the will, and asked her the sources of her information as to her nephews. Her answer was peculiar: "All the world knows what Milton is, and thinks it knows what Homer and Virgil are; but I know what Homer is, and he knows what Virgil is." After this enigmatical sentence she proceeded to give further directions regarding her will. All the nephews, as well as the members of the aunt's household, had known of the provisions of the will, for no secret was made of the matter.

Before the party returned from the police station, Judge Egert had reached the office and we were discussing the case when the gentlemen entered.

Mr. Virgil Manson soon excused himself, on the plea that he must visit Miss Lilian Arnold, Dr. Manson's betrothed, and give her such encouragement as he could.

"You are acquainted with the lady, then?" I ventured.

"Oh, yes, we are old friends. At one time we were even more than that. She is a member of our District Relief Society, one of its most active members, too; a most estimable and charming girl. How deeply I feel for her in this awful situation!"

The statement of the case made by Mr. Miller to Judge Egert and myself was certainly far from reassuring. The doctor could not fix the time of his departure from his aunt's house nearer than between a quarter before and a quarter after nine, as he had not looked at his watch until, perhaps, an hour afterward. His call had been pleasant, except that his aunt had expressed marked disapproval of Miss Lilian Arnold, whom the doctor had defended warmly, and they had both become quite excited. There had been no discussion whatever regarding the will, such as Miss Reath had stated. The scarf was one the doctor had brought as a present to his aunt; it was his habit to bring her all his old scarfs to work into crazy-quilts. knew nothing of the button missing from his overcoat, nor did he know how the broken scalpel came in the wound. He had worn a silk hat at the time of his call instead of a derby, but admitted that he had worn the derby during the earlier part of the evening and also when he went to the club later; he could assign no reason for making this change of hats. was generally known that they were careless at the Madison-avenue residence about putting on the catchlock; in fact, he remembered that he himself had put on the catch when he left the house the previous evening. He also remembered that he had closed the door between the reception-room and the hall, as his aunt was going to read for a while. He denied having slammed the front door; he had left both the reception-room and the house almost noiselessly. He declined to state where he went from the club, as he did not wish to connect the names of innocent persons with the scandal of a murder case. He said that Miss Reath had expected to be well provided for in the will, but was left only one hundred dollars, the same amount having been left to John Meade, the butler. All of Miss Reath's statements regarding the conversation and the doors were false, and he, naturally, believed that she had some knowledge of, or connection with, the murder. All his aunt's nephews were accustomed to visit her occasionally. Although she was quite severe with Milton for his shiftless habits, yet, in her kindness of heart, she quite often advanced him money. She had invested in one of the schemes Virgil had promoted, losing money thereby, and declined thereafter even to examine any other investment proposed by him, but had taken an interest in his charitable associations, giving money freely to some of them. The chief bond between the doctor and herself seemed to be her family pride in his success, rather than any sincere affection for himself.

The doctor solemnly asserted his innocence, but was much cast down, seeming to be more exercised over the deadly blow dealt to his reputation by his arrest than over any danger to his life. In fact, he seemed dazed and puzzled at his peculiar position.

puzzled at his peculiar position.
"To sum it all up," said I, "his story is that he did not commit the

crime, that he does not suspect any one, unless it be Miss Reath, and that he denies most of the evidence against himself, except that which is most incriminating—the clues, the scalpel, the scarf and the button. Is that a fair statement of the matter?"

"Yes, that states the case fairly," replied Mr. Miller. "I told the doctor his case was a dangerous one. He asked me to procure some hydrate of chloral to quiet his nerves, as he feared he could not sleep. His manner is that of a guilty man who is puzzled how to account for his actions. If his language were not so clear, one might almost suspect insanity."

"What is your opinion of the matter now, Howard?" I asked, turning to Mr.

Freeman.

"You know how loath I was to believe him guilty when I read the account," answered Howard. "I knew him at college and always liked him, but I now recall that he was very quick-tempered. Miss Reath's story comports with this view of the matter. He may have killed his aunt in one of those violent rages for which he was noted."

"Well, gentlemen," said I, "the firm has taken the case, and we must do the best we can. There are a few details to examine, and I shall have Mr. Germaine take the matter up at once."

To my surprise, Judge Egert offered no suggestion, but seemed absorbed in deep thought as the informal confer-

ence broke up.

The next morning, both the cousins, Milton and Virgil, came to our office and urged us to do all in our power for their accused relative. The newspapers were unanimous in their view that this was the most fiendish and deliberate murder which had been committed in years, and they insisted that neither wealth nor position should avail to shield the murderer.

The grand jury would not meet for two weeks, and on my suggestion, to allay public excitement, Dr. Manson waived examination and was committed to the Tombs without bail, to await the action of the jury.

Mr. Germaine made an investigation that was thorough. He questioned all the servants in the house. butler, John Meade, was far from communicative. He was evidently hostile to Dr. Manson, because the physician had urged his aunt to leave the butler nothing in her will. He thought that the doctor had worn a silk hat on the evening of the murder, but refused to state so positively. The butler had left the house about half-past eight and had returned shortly after nine. He had not heard the door slam, as Miss Reath had stated it did. thought he would have heard it if the noise had been great, as it was his duty to attend the door. He asserted that Miss Manson was a very trying mistress, full of whims and very exacting with servants, in fact, with every one with whom she was associated. had expected to receive at least a thousand dollars by her will, but was left only a paltry hundred. fused to state where he was while he was away from the house that evening, but Mr. Germaine found that he had visited three saloons, and that he had stopped at one both while going for the police and while returning. The other servants in the house knew little of the events of the evening, until summoned by the cries of Miss Reath. None of them, however, had heard any slamming of the front door, as alluded to by the secretary.

office - boy, The James Carroll, thought the doctor had worn a derby hat all the afternoon and evening of that day. He did not recall his wearing a silk hat. He said the doctor was a disagreeable employer and forced him to do menial work, such as taking invitations around the city for Miss Manson's social entertainments. Carroll was a medical student, and felt himself superior to his station. claimed that Miss Manson had always been ungrateful toward him, notwithstanding the services he rendered her. Yet, she was at times cajoling, and on one occasion, learning that he deemed it would require about a thousand dollars to enable him to begin the practice of medicine after graduation, she had told him that she was a benevolent woman, who liked to assist the worthy, and intimated very strongly that she might advance him that sum or leave it to him in her will. He had relied on this implied promise for a time, but had learned later that he was not even named in the will. Carroll manifested the utmost indifference as to both the murder and the

fate of his former employer. There was one thing that puzzled Mr. Germaine—the weapon which had crushed Miss Manson's skull. Reath declared that there was nothing in the reception-room with which such a blow could have been inflicted. Mr. Germaine was of the opinion that such a blow could have been dealt by a heavy cane, if wielded by an athletic person. To sum it all up, Mr. Germaine ascertained nothing of any benefit to the accused, unless it was the butler's opinion regarding the silk hat, and this seemed to us too trivial to have much bearing on the case. All the partners were in the consultation-room when the report was made, but there was little said until I took the initiative.

"If we can bring him off with lifeimprisonment, it will certainly be a victory for the firm. The real truth is that we never should have taken the case."

"Life-imprisonment!" exclaimed Mr. Miller. "You are optimistic, judge! This case is clear; the motive is plain. The doctor admits the disagreement regarding his sweetheart, and Miss Reath tells of the quarrel over the will. The old lady was doubtless going to change it. The opportunity to commit the crime was not unfavorable. The doctor could not have known of Miss Reath's presence in the library, or have foreseen the chances that left the tell-tale clues. Cruel character is such a wellknown trait in murderers that I need hardly comment on it. The facts are plain and, in the main, admitted. They prove, not merely beyond a reasonable doubt, but beyond all possibility of doubt, that this man is incontestably——"

"Innocent," interrupted Judge Egert; "absolutely and incontestably innocent."

All of us looked at the old judge as if we doubted having heard him correctly. Mr. Miller was indignant and continued his remarks.

"No, not innocent, but guilty. The evidence incontrovertibly proves his guilt."

"The evidence, on the contrary, establishes his innocence beyond even an iota of doubt," maintained Judge Egert.

"You mean, judge," observed Mr. Freeman, "that you believe Miss Reath's story to be false and so infer that there is a conspiracy to fasten this crime on Dr. Manson?"

"I mean nothing of the kind," rejoined the old judge. "I don't know and I don't care whether this woman's story is true or false. A woman's mouth is not always a well-spring of truth, as every man who has cut his wisdom teeth knows. But consider all her statements to be true; with the admitted circumstances they prove, beyond the possibility of doubt, that, whoever committed this murder, it was not Dr. Homer Manson. It is a mathematical certainty, in fact; one of the most simple problems in the logic of circumstances."

"You have the proud distinction, judge, of being unique in your views," said Mr. Miller, who was plainly out of humor. "All the rest of the people in this city are evidently fools. Why don't you write a book on the relations of mathematics to murder and cite this case?"

I resolved to preserve peace, if possible, and endeavored to reconcile my partners.

"Judge Egert," I said, "I trust you are correct, both for the sake of Dr. Manson and for the sake of the firm. You will pardon us, however, if we cannot grasp your views unless you state them."

"I wish to ask Mr. Germaine a few questions before I make any statement," said the old judge. "Is Dr. Manson left- or right-handed?"

"Right-handed. Why do you ask?"
"Because the crushing blow was on
the right side of the head. Does he
carry a cane?"

"No; when he goes out at night he

prefers to take a revolver."

"How old is the office-boy and on what terms is he with the doctor?"

"He is about nimeteen years old, but athletic," replied Mr. Germaine. "The doctor was about to discharge him for incompetency and inattention. I suspected it was his feeling against his employer which made him so positive that the doctor wore a derby hat that night. The boy is evidently of a sullen and revengeful nature."

"Was there any peculiar event, except this murder," resumed Judge Egert, "which took place in that part of the city about nine o'clock, the same night, so far as you have ascertained?"

"None that I have heard of," answered Mr. Germaine. "What peculiar event do you allude to?"

"I can't say, myself," returned Judge Egert, "but I think the one who had the wit to plan this murder so skilfully had also the wit to fabricate an alibi, which might be needed."

"Your questions are as mystifying as your view of the case, it appears to me," remarked Mr. Miller. "It would surprise me to have you give any possible reason for believing Dr. Manson innocent."

"It is no reason of my own," began Judge Egert; "it is the incontrovertible, remorseless logic of circumstances, clear as crystal, immutable as the laws of the universe. Let us consider this case in the light of the facts stated. Dr. Manson is a man of exceptional mental power, a trained physician, an able surgeon, one whose nerves are unshaken. He was residuary legatee under the will of his aunt and was known to have called on her that evening. Had he wished to kill her, he could have done so in many ways that would have

eluded detection—by disease germs, for example, for he was her physician, and could not only have prescribed for her, but have signed the deathcertificate without exciting the slightest suspicion. Now, instead of that -and you will remark that for the present I admit that he had the motive, opportunity and character of a murderer-how does he kill her? He first crushes her skull with a blunt instrument which, shifted into his left hand, would have been most awkward; and then, to make it positively certain that any one must recognize him as the murderer, he takes a scalpel from his instrumentcase and thrusts it into her heart. breaking it off in the wound. also leaves a scarf, which he admits to be his, in the murdered woman's hand, and, as if that were not enough, he goes to the hall, tears a button off his overcoat and, returning to the reception-room, throws it on the floor. For fear that, with all these incontestable proofs of guilt, there may still be some doubt that he killed this woman, the doctor leaves the door of the reception-room open and then slams the front door—if we are to believe Miss Reath—the only possible purpose of which was to arouse the inmates of the house and call attention to the time of his departure. I don't see what more he could have done, unless it were to call in the servants and the secretary, and murder his aunt in their presence."

"Looked at from your point of view, it does not seem plausible that the murder could have been committed

in this way," I observed.

"Plausible!" continued Judge Egert; "I tell you, it was simply impossible, unless the doctor is a lunatic with a monomania to commit suicide by sitting in the electric chair. In some respects logic resembles mathematics and the conclusions are as certain when the premises are established. For example, when you go into a room and remain there some time, you ordinarily leave no perceptible trace of your presence; it would be

exceptional if you left any article that could constitute a clue to your presence there. The existence of one clue, then, would be exceptional; but suppose there should be two clues, that would be still more extraordinary. It may be stated as a logical premise that the chances would not be one in a hundred that a careful man, not desiring so to do, would leave a single trace of his presence in a room; one to ten thousand that he would leave two; one to a million that he would leave three; or, to state it mathematically, the variation is that of the direct ratio of unity to the ultimate product of the number of clues, in geometrical progression, each clue being assumed to be of the constant value of one to a hundred. Now, here we have five distinct clues: the presence of the doctor, the scalpel, the scarf, the button and the slamming of the door; so, working out the problem mathematically, you can see that the chance that the doctor committed this murder, admitting he had the motive, opportunity and character of a murderer, is just one in ten billions. As the entire population of the globe is supposed to be less than a billion and a half, using the French and American system of numeration, it follows that the logic of circumstances proves beyond the possibility of a doubt, more than six times over, that of all the men, women and children in the world Dr. Manson could not have committed this murder. Do I make the proposition clear? Can you see the relation of mathematics to murder, Mr. Miller?"

"Yes, I can see your ingenious theory," responded the latter. "It is very pretty as a study in mathematics or logic, but the trouble is that it is subversive of all principles of evidence. It will be difficult to convince a judge and twelve level-headed jurors that the more proof you have of a man's guilt the greater is the probability of his innocence."

"Twelve level-headed idiots!" exclaimed Judge Egert. "The average juryman is about as competent to

weigh evidence as a pig is to dance a polka. Men gathered indiscriminately from the farm, the shop and the saloon are, under our judicial system, selected to pass on problems whose solution necessitates the highest degree of mental acumen. The only thing that saves the system from being an utter abomination is that trained thinkers, lawyers, can enlighten the jurors by their arguments. However, this case will never go to a jury."

"Never go to a jury?" I exclaimed, in surprise. "Do you, then, think the

doctor will commit suicide?"

"Commit suicide? Of course not. But when this case is fully presented to the district attorney, he will never ask for the indictment of Dr. Manson; he will—"

"Go on, Judge Egert," interrupted Mr. Miller, testily. "Perhaps you will finally prove that Miss Manson murdered herself, jumping up and striking her head against the chandelier, then robbing Dr. Manson of his scalpel and plunging it into her own heart. Your theory is so simple, so plausible, so natural, and appeals so strongly to an ordinary man's common sense! Of course, with your eccentric views, you know who really did murder this unfortunate lady."

"I fear, Miller," returned Judge Egert, "you are a little chagrined because your analytical theory regarding crime has failed you on one occasion. I don't know who killed Miss Manson, but I can describe the person."

"Describe him!" I cried, in astonishment. "How can that be possible?"

"I did not say 'him'; I said 'person'. It certainly does not look like a woman's work; unless it be assumed that Miss Reath is in love with Dr. Manson and jealous of him—the world has discovered no limitations to a jealous woman's capabilities. But I said that I could describe the person; this is the description: some left-handed person having the opportunity to obtain the doctor's scalpel and to take a button from his overcoat; who hated Dr. Manson bitterly



enough to desire to see him sit in the electric chair, and who knew of his presence in the house that night; one, too, who knew that the front door was habitually unlocked; one so well known to Miss Manson as to provoke no outcry from that lady when the person entered the reception-room, and one strong enough to deal a crushing blow upon the victim's skull."

Then, turning to Mr. Germaine; the judge asked: "By the way, did the office-boy know of the door being unlocked and of the doctor's pres-

ence in the house?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Germaine, "all his intimate friends knew that Dr. Manson visited his aunt each Monday evening. The office-boy had frequently gone to the aunt's house, when the doctor was called on professionally, and entered there without

ringing the bell."

"My belief is," continued Judge Egert, "that this murder was very suddenly planned; that it was committed either by some one in the house, or by one who entered it shortly before Dr. Manson left. The person could not have entered afterward, for you will remember the doctor put the latch on as he left; yet the crime was planned with great skill to throw the gravest suspicion on an innocent man."

"Yes," remarked Mr. Miller, drily, "gravest suspicion is a good phrase when a man is caught almost redhanded, and every intelligent man in the whole city, with one exception,

believes him guilty."

"Now, I assume," continued Judge Egert, without noticing Mr. Miller's sarcasm, "that a person capable of planning such a murder would endeavor to establish an alibi, if possible. A well-established alibi is always the best proof of innocence. If there was an attempt to establish an alibi, it was probably done, as is usual, by calling particular attention to the time of some occurrence which was peculiar, as that is the sole means possible of fabricating an alibi with

certainty. A real alibi is usually a little uncertain as to time, but when an alibi is fabricated, special effort is always made to establish all the facts with certainty."

"And you are actually credulous enough," asked Mr. Miller, "to hope to discover such assumed action for the problematical fabrication of a supposititious alibi on the part of your hypothetical criminal, at a time which

is undetermined?"

"I certainly hope so to do," replied Judge Egert. "If one wants anything in this world, he usually advertises for it. That is what I shall do in this case. It is not certain, but is worth trying. I must request that no hint of my views be given to any one. One thing more: much as I dislike to do so, I must call on Miss Lily Reath; I must see this woman. No report can tell what lurks in the thought-concealing eyes of a woman."

The next day Judge Egert and I called on Miss Reath at the Manson

residence.

Miss Lily Reath was a peculiar woman. She was about twenty-eight years old, fair, yellow-haired, grayeyed, tall, powerful and graceful, not beautiful, but of commanding presence and perfectly self-contained. Her face was refined, but she had the high cheek-bones characteristic of the American Indian, and her expression was stoical. Her manner was calm, and yet her cold gray eyes seemed to conceal passions which might be dangerous to one rash enough to offend her.

Her story did not vary from that which she had told the police immediately after the murder, and she told it simply, yet most positively, without comment. But two or three allusions to Dr. Manson soon revealed the fact that she was very bitter toward him, her only emotion being betrayed by a vengeful light coming into her eyes and her voice being slightly raised, when, in answer to Judge Egert's question if she had any warmer feeling than friendship for the doctor, she responded: "No, never. He would

have ruined me if he could, just as he defamed my character before the murder and questioned my veracity after it. He is a cold-blooded libertine and a heartless villain."

She said that Miss Manson was a hard mistress and had been very unjust in leaving only one hundred dollars to her, who had borne her mistress's almost insufferable whims for many years, in fact, given the best years of her life to a distasteful service. she said this calmly and without She seemed to excitement. steeled her soul to hide any emotion beneath the mask of cold features. Judge Egert asked her if she could obtain for him any photographs of Dr. Manson and herself. She gave him a quick, penetrating glance, indicating distrust and unwillingness; then she went to an album, took out two photographs and handed them to him—with her left hand.

"I do not understand her at all," said Judge Egert, after we had left the house, "but that is not surprising. Since the day when Eve and the serpent took their little lunch in the garden, what man has ever understood a woman?"

"I notice one thing quite peculiar in this case," I remarked.

"What is that?"

"All who had any relations with Miss Manson speak of her as hard to satisfy, complaining or whimsical. She seems to have been a woman of great severity and to have been loved by none."

"What is there peculiar in that?" returned Judge Egert. "She was an old maid and simply attained the highest ideal in that character. Can you not see something still more pe-

culiar in the case?"

"No; I fail to see anything remark-

able," I answered.

"Everybody," observed Judge Egert, "except his own relations, seems to dislike Dr. Homer Manson. His aunt merely admired his intellect, Miss Reath and the butler detest him, and his office-boy regards him with deadly hatred. I can account for it

only by his cold, cruel nature. You know cruelty to animals is one of the marked characteristics of homicidal criminals."

The next Sunday the following advertisement appeared in all the leading newspapers:

Personal.—The undersigned will pay one dollar for proof of any unusual or remarkable circumstance occurring between half-past eight and half-past nine o'clock last Monday evening, between Second and Sixth avenues and Twenty-third and Thirty-fourth streets in this city. The circumstance must have been noted as occurring within the time stated. If the information shall prove of value to the undersigned, a reward of one hundred dollars will be paid for it. State facts fully.

There were thirty-six answers received, several naming the murder as a peculiar circumstance, and they made a singular revelation of what takes place in a great city. I went over them with Judge Egert. In that hour these are some of the things that occurred: A Frenchwoman was hugged by a dancing bear in Second avenue; two gamblers held straight flushes against each other in Jim Ward's poker-room on Twenty-fourth street; a man was seen to kiss his wife three times in the course of fifteen minutes in a house on Twenty-ninth street.

"The writer of this note is probably a fantastic and picturesque prevari-

cator," remarked Judge Egert.

Hans Oberhaupt held sequences in succession in a pinochle game in Gus Meyer's saloon on Sixth avenue. On a bet, a man drank a quart of whiskey, at one draught, in another saloon on the same avenue.

There were other events described, almost equally unusual. Only two replies interested us. One stated that, a little after nine o'clock that evening, a tall woman was seen to run from Madison to Fifth avenue, on Twentyninth street. When she reached Fifth avenue the woman stopped and quickly retraced her steps.

The second letter was from the nightclerk of a drug-store on the corner of Sixth avenue and Twenty-seventh street. I quote the material part of it: At ten minutes past nine o'clock I was waiting on a customer in the front part of the store when a man stepped very quickly into the side entrance. As soon as practicable, I went to him and asked what he wanted. "I have been waiting some time, and am in a hurry," he said. "I want some hydrate of chloral for an aching tooth."

As I was getting the drug, he broke a vase standing on the show-case. It was very clumsily, it seemed to me, purposely, done, and I compelled him to pay three dollars for it. He said he did not have time to wait and would rather pay than have any trouble, as he had an engagement to meet a man at nine o'clock. I remarked that it was already after nine. "You are wrong," he said, and showed me his watch, which indicated five minutes to nine. He was slightly out of breath, as if he had been walking quite fast or running. I do not know whether you will consider this unusual, but it seemed so to me. There was something peculiar in the man's manner and he was quite nervous. I hope you will send me the money, as I need it.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN A. MOORB.

Judge Egert proceeded to investigate the statements contained in these letters. On the second day thereafter he came to my office.

"Would it surprise you," he asked, "to learn that the lady who ran west on Twenty-ninth street, on the night of the murder, was Miss Lily Reath?"

"It certainly would."

"Nevertheless, she has confessed it to Mr. Germaine, after I was prepared to prove it, for her photograph was recognized by the man who wrote the letter regarding that fact. This impassive woman was not, however, disconcerted. She now claims that she followed the murderer to identify him positively, but, on reaching Fifth avenue, saw him turn down Broadway; so she returned to the house and gave the alarm. The investigation regarding the man mentioned by the drugclerk will require more care. Do you think it possible, judge, that a man could have the subtlety to commit a murder and leave so many incriminating clues that their very number would induce the reasoning that he was not the criminal?"

"No," I replied, "the idea is too far-fetched. Besides, Dr. Manson has

broached no such theory; it is yours alone."

"At any rate," continued Judge Egert, "if the drug-clerk's story is true, the close of the case may be not only dramatic, but startling. He claims not to recognize the photograph of Dr. Manson. I am preparing for him another test which has occurred to me. I shall ask him to call on Dr. Manson at the Tombs to-morrow afternoon and then come here to meet Mr. Freeman and me, after our conference with the Manson cousins. I presume you have no objection to his sitting in the ante-room until this conference is over?"

"Certainly not," I responded, although I failed utterly to perceive the reason for his request.

Late the following afternoon I saw a young man, quite closely muffled, talking with the clerk in the anteroom; but I made no inquiries.

On Friday morning Judge Egert

came again to my office.

"The Manson case is drawing to a close," he said. "While I have conducted it thus far, I feel that some one should share the responsibility with me. I wish to know positively if our firm is definitely employed in this case, and, if so, by whom. You know I was not present when the arrangements were made."

"The employment is perfectly regular," said I. "Mr. Virgil Manson came on behalf of his cousin, Homer. I consented that the firm should take the case, and Mr. Miller closed the contract with Dr. Manson, at the police station."

"Very well," said Judge Egert. "I wish to make no mistake now, for I find that the logic of circumstances has misled me as to the motive of the crime. It is a far more complex and much deeper crime than I imagined, one whose fiendishness and cruelty are almost beyond belief, an almost unparalleled example of the refinement of murder. No wonder it bewilders the mind."

"It bewilders me no more than your words do now," I ventured. "Don't

let your logic of circumstances carry you too far beyond the bounds of reason."

"All right, judge," he said, with a twinkle in his deep blue eyes. "Remember, you divide the responsibility with me. It will be your legal advice, as well as my logic of circumstances, that may condemn a fellow-mortal to There will be a meeting of all the parties connected with this case at the district attorney's office, to-morrow afternoon. Dr. Manson will be brought from the Tombs, and Miss Reath, the butler, the office-boy, the letter-writers and others will be there. The French method of confronting the accused with his accusers will be tested. The district attorney does not believe in my theory, but is willing to give me an opportunity to discover the slayer of Miss Sappho Manson."

It was a little after one o'clock the next day when Judge Egert left our offices. I could see that he was somewhat excited and perturbed. The two cousins, Milton and Virgil Manson, were with him, but they evidently did not understand the importance Judge Egert attached to the approaching interview with the district attorney and the witnesses in the case.

It was after four o'clock when Judge Egert returned to our offices. Mr. Miller and Mr. Freeman were with me in the consultation-room, and we all felt that a crisis was at hand. Judge Egert was quite pale as he entered the room.

"My partners," he said, "this is the last murder-case I shall ever undertake. I do not care to be both attorney and executioner. I feared this outcome. The slayer of Miss Sappho Manson is no more, and a corpse is lying in the office of the district attorney."

"You mean that Dr. Homer Manson, under pressure of the evidence, has committed suicide?" cried Mr. Miller.

"I did not say so," remarked Judge Egert, "but I may as well tell the story.

"When we assembled at the district attorney's office, there was evident anxiety on the faces of all present. I stated my view of the logic of the circumstances in this case. The district attorney admitted its force, but denied its efficacy. I could see, however, that Dr. Manson felt much relieved. reviewed the evidence and commented on the failure of Miss Reath to state the whole truth to the police. A shadow swept over her features, and for the first time that imperturbable woman changed color and trembled. I then detailed, rapidly and tersely, the manner in which, as I believed, the murder had been committed, and I spoke of the results of my investigation of the facts, detailing the events immediately following the murder, including the fact that two people were seen running on Twenty-ninth street. Then I suddenly told the story of the attempted fabrication of an alibi. did this graphically, while more than one of my hearers turned pale with emotion. When I ceased speaking, it was apparent that all present were convinced as to who was really guilty. After a moment's pause I said that, to guard against any mistake, I would now name the criminal. Before I could do so, however, one of those present sprang up and burst into tears.

"'It will be necessary to take this person into custody,' said the district attorney. 'I will ring for the police.'

"'No; don't do that,' exclaimed the criminal. 'I have suffered agony enough without that. I can endure no more. Give me pen and paper, and I will narrate the events of that evening. Judge Egert, however, has correctly stated the more important ones.'

"The writing materials were furnished and the confession written. As the pen moved we could hear an occasional sob of emotion, as though the writer were yielding to some overmastering mental agony. The writing continued for several minutes, and then we noticed that the writer was sitting motionless. Suddenly, there was a falling forward of the body and the head rested on the table. We all rushed forward, and as we did so we

noticed a strong odor of bitter almonds, and recognized that prussic acid had done its deadly work—the hand which had slain Miss Sappho Manson was cold in death.

"Well, the Manson case is ended, for the confession had been signed and the guilt had been acknowledged even had this not been done. Here are the last words written by one who has passed into the great hereafter. I will read the confession:

"'My hand alone slew Miss Sappho Manson. My confession can make but little difference. The 'be all and the end all' are close at hand for me, now. For years I was a slave to the caprices of this woman who was deaf to all the higher aspirations of my nature, and when she felt she could not much longer possess her hoarded wealth, as a reward for my patient devotion she cheated me of my rights, under the influence of one of the most cold-blooded, cruel, heartless men in the whole world. This man has been my evil genius. It seems as if he was born to balk me in all my wishes. I knew of his presence in the house and I wished to overhear his remarks, especially regarding me.

remarks, especially regarding me.

"'I slipped into the hall and from there into the unlighted parlor. The door of the reception-room was ajar. I could hear the doctor talking of his love for his sweetheart. Yes, he could talk of love, but he cared nothing for the agony endured by others. I heard him speak of the scarf he had brought. Suddenly, the possibilities of the case occurred to me. The quarrel regarding Miss Arnold gave me the idea. Here, unless my wrongs were righted, I could at once have revenge on the only two persons in the world I hated—and such a great revenge! The doctor's overcoat was hanging on the hat-rack. It was the work of a moment to go to it, extract a scalpel from his instrument-case and tear a button from the overcoat. By the side of the hat-rack was a heavy piece of wood, with an iron slit in the end, which was used for turning the keys of the chandeliers.

"It was ten minutes to nine when the doctor came out, softly as a cat, closed the door of the reception-room, put on his overcoat and slipped very quietly out of the front door. There was a smile of cruel satisfaction on his smug features. I at once entered the reception-room. I spoke of the will and its injustice. Miss Manson refused to change it and mocked at my distress. I had the stick in my hand. I struck one powerful blow and almost immediately plunged the scalpel into her heart. She sank with merely a stifled cry. I threw the button on the floor, placed the stick where I had found it, and at once left the

house, slamming the front door. So far, I had done all possible to accomplish my purpose. The fact that my being left-handed might attract attention to me never entered my mind. That my subsequent acts led to the proof of my guilt I regard as simply an unlucky accident. I can say, with my last words, that my only regret is that my revenge has been incomplete. The hand of the law shall never be laid upon me. With the little vial in my pocket I have the means to end it all, and at once.'

"That is all the confession, except the name," said Judge Egert. "Of course, you all can tell the name that is signed to it."

"If Dr. Manson is not guilty, which is still hard to believe," said Mr. Miller, "there can be only one other person who killed Miss Manson—her secretary, Miss Lily Reath, who, in that case, deceived the police regarding the facts. I have had a dim suspicion that she might be guilty."

"What say you, Howard?" asked Judge Egert, turning to our junior

partner.

"I believe it was John Meade, the butler. He had nerved himself for the act by his visits to the various saloons," responded Mr. Freeman.

"And you, judge?" said my old part-

ner, turning to me.

"I still think it was the office-boy," said I; "when the young are vicious they are very vicious. Which of our surmises is correct?"

"None of them," replied Judge Egert. "The hand which struck down Miss Sappho Manson was the hand of one whom I suspected when I had fully considered Miss Reath's story regarding the quarrel over the will and pondered on the murdered woman's last words. The murderous motive was not revenge alone, as the confession states; it was also the sordid one of inheriting a fortune, not only from the dead woman, but from an innocent man executed for a murder committed by this inhuman criminal. Love, jealousy, envy, hate, revenge, hypocrisy and damnable cunning had made the mind of this monster a hell of seething passions.

"The one who lies dead in the district attorney's office is the rejected suitor of Miss Lilian Arnold, the disinherited nephew of Miss Sappho Manson, the bitter enemy of his successful cousin, whose heir he hoped to be, the famed, but false, philanthropist, Mr.

Virgil Manson, who, planning a murder to incriminate another, while fabricating an alibi for himself, has fallen a victim to the logic of circumstances."



LULLABY OF THE CELTIC CHILD

CLEEP, little child, Dream, O mine own! Winds may be wild, Thou'rt not alone. Mother and sire Watch o'er thy dream; Soft burns the fire; Out of its gleam Back come those eyes Dead long ago, Back come the sighs, Laughter and woel Round thy small bed Gathers a host, Drawn from the dead, Each a dear ghost! All of thy race Watch o'er thy sleep, Breathe on thy face Benisons deep! Sleep, little child, Dream, O mine own! Winds may be wild, Thou'rt not alone!

VICTOR PLARR.



CHILDISH FOLLY

NODD—What! Married eight years and got seven children? That's doing pretty well, old man.
TODD—Yes; a great deal better than we expected.



PLATONIC affection is a vegetarian diet of love.

THE TRAGEDY OF A CARRIAGE-CALL

By Roy Melbourne Chalmers

RS. MARTIN wished to go at half-past ten, because the reception was dreadfully slow. Only a few of her acquaintances were there; she didn't like Mrs. Blake, her hostess: Mr. Blake, who was charming, had not put in an appearance at all; her own very inconsiderate husband was devoting an unreasonable amount of time to somebody whom she despised; her new gown had failed dismally—and there was not much of anything to eat! So she plucked Mr. Martin by the sleeve and told him.

At the prospect of tearing himself away from the woman who was despised, he looked the embodiment of discontent—but, being a wise man, he foresaw the disadvantage of refusing his wife and preferred to sacrifice a few moments of self-gratification for a week of domestic peace—if not felicity.

Shortly afterward the man on the street was shouting boisterously for "91," their hired carriage. They were ready, waiting in the small room off the hall.

Five minutes passed, but "91" had not responded. The man with the giant lungs stuck to it perseveringly; "91" echoed and reechoed up and down the street.

Mrs. Martin was, of course, annoyed at the delay. Her husband did not seem to care much—he was looking toward the drawing-room, with a speculative air.

"No, you don't!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, suddenly comprehending. She was too late; the despised woman had caught Mr. Martin's eye—well,

she had seen him waiting, and she came.

Twenty minutes passed—dragged, for Mrs. Martin. The despised being wouldn't move. "91" was still derelict. The man with the big voice kept it up like a Trojan. The coachmen along the street had long since considered "91" as a popular joke, and "91" systematically passed from mouth to mouth, pitched in every grade of voice known to the vocal specialist. But "91" was lost, obviously.

At eleven Mrs. Martin was furious. To feel de trop when you are with your domestic partner and somebody else must be distressing, especially under these circumstances.

She now positively decided to walk. She had wished to go long before, but for the sake of conventional appearance and a décolleté had waited. When she expressed her intention the despised lady would not listen to it.

"We can all go in my carriage," said she; and, in spite of the remonstrances on Mrs. Martin's part, they went.

And "91"?

A solitary carriage stood near the house at three o'clock. The horses were fast asleep, the driver was in a somnolent state. The man with the magnificent clarion voice had disappeared. The caterer's men had melted away in the distance, with their ice-cream. In the house the musical strains were long ago hushed and the windows were dimmed.

After some hesitancy the lonely driver, benumbed by long sitting, crawled to the pavement and, go-

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ing up the steps, rang the bell. Finally, a butler in his night-clothes shivered at the door.

"Is anybody here going home in a carriage?" asked the driver, in a for-

lorn way.

"Lord!" exclaimed the butler, starting violently, "are you '91'?"

A horrible suspicion seized the driver. He fumbled in his pocket and pulled out a carriage-check. Straining his eyes he read it by the subdued light from the hall—then utterly collapsed.

"I thought it was '16'!" he mur-

mured, feebly.



SONG

(IN VENICE)

THAT I with thee, along the tideless stream,
Might idly float—as night's deep purples stretch
A canopy, and moonlit towers etch
Their grace of line upon the wave—and dream
Of joys to be!

That I with thee, whilst music steals the ears, Should let mine eyes alone reveal the sign Of heart desire, and find my fate in thine, Whose light of love gives hope to all the years, And life to me!

That I with thee, full-furled the hurrying sail, In some soft shallop, silken-hung, might drift To where the mystic sunset portals lift Their burnished gold—and find, behind the veil, New ecstasy!

HARVEY MAITLAND WATTS.



AT THE BALL

THE ROSE—The violet affects to be so modest and shrinking!
THE ORCHID—Don't you believe it, my dear. I saw her pass just now with a very low-cut gown.



AFTER THE EXPULSION

EVE—I'm so sorry!
ADAM—Too bad! It was a fool's paradise.

AN EXPERIMENT OF JIMMY ROGERS'S

By Justus Miles Forman

"T TELL you, it won't do," said Livingstone, setting his glass down very hard on the little marbletopped table. "The man may be a very good sort in his way, and I don't say he's not; he may be honest and generous and good-hearted and anything else you like, but he's not a gentleman. He has not had either the birth or the breeding of a gentleman, and I say you've no right to inflict him on your friends and my friends socially. admire him all you like, but I don't wish to present him to the girls I know, or introduce him into places where he's obviously not at home. Eh, what? Give me a cigarette."

"Now, that's all rot, you know," said Jimmy Rogers, squirming about in an irritated fashion. "You've a great lot of fool conservative prejudices that make you blind to the chap's real worth—and yet, I never knew a man who went about doing so many extraordinary things as you do. You're not what I call consistent. Now, Lawson may lack a sort of outside varnish, because he's had a rough life. He hasn't had time to learn some of the little things that we think are important, but he's worth about six of either of us. He's a man."

"Six of you, possibly," murmured Mr. Livingstone in gentle correction.

"You know as well as I do," continued Jimmy Rogers, "that there's no more promising sculptor in the Quarter. And you know, too, that he has done a lot of jolly-fine things for other chaps who were in hard luck. He practically supported that poor young Sewell, who was starving on oatmeal and water over in the rue Vavin.

And Lawson himself had no money to spare. I say it's a cursed shame that such a man shouldn't be able to go about among the sort of people whose acquaintance he's entitled to. He'd soon pick up the little tricks if he were given a chance."

Livingstone his shook head. "You're all wrong," said he, "but I've no hope whatever of making you see it. I tell you the man's character has nothing to do with the question. I said before, I'm ready to admire him, but I'm not ready to take him to teas and dinners and things. He doesn't belong. He hasn't been trained to it, and, if you try to force him into that sort of thing, you'll get into trouble. You take my word for it. The common or garden potato," he argued, venturing ambitiously into metaphor, "is, I am told, a most useful and important plant—we couldn't pommes soufflées without it—but it is out of place, not to say absurd, in a rose garden."

"Rose garden!" sneered Jimmy Rogers; "rose garden! Meaning the Anglo-American colony here in Paris, I suppose. I like your choice of words. What particular sort of rosebud do you think you are, now, you—you woodland violet! Oh, you make me ill!"

Livingstone rose with great dignity and threw a two-franc piece down beside his little pile of price-marked saucers.

"There is no arguing with you," said he, "nor convincing you of anything. You've got a very silly notion in your head, and I suppose you'll go and act on it. But, mind you, I'll be no party to your nonsense. I warn

you, you will get into trouble. I am going home to dress for dinner." He paused at the curb, with one foot on the step of a fiacre, and looked back to see where his chum sat glowering under the awning of the café. "You might enter upon your career of instruction," he suggested, helpfully, "by telling your protégé that tan boots with a frock coat are seldom seen in the best houses. He has a fancy for the combination, I notice."

Jimmy Rogers cursed.

Young Lawson was a sculptor from somewhere in the Western States of America. His early training, like that of many other good men, had been in modeling architectural ornamentation in stucco and in making clay models for ornate and very inartistic tombstones; but he had a genuine love for his art and the capacity for taking infinite pains. He was a student under Denys Puesch. As Jimmy Rogers had said, he had not lived an easy life, and the constant struggle to keep body and soul together had left him small leisure or opportunity to cultivate the social Withal, he was a very frank and open-hearted young man, and seemed to have many excellent and sterling qualities.

Jimmy Rogers had met the man at the Art Club on the Quai de Conti, which he and Gerald Livingstone had fits of frequenting, and it had seemed to him that here was an opportunity for doing a worthy man a very good He knew the sort of people among whom young Lawson went about, and it seemed to him rather a pity that so good a fellow should be wasting himself in this way should see nothing of a social circle which would both appreciate and help Rogers spoke to a number of people on the subject, and was surprised and rather disgusted to find that most of them shared Gerald Livingstone's views. It seemed to him that they were very narrow and intolerant and over-conservative. But two or three of the girls to whom he spoke were very nice about it, and said that they would be glad to have him bring Mr. Lawson to call on one of their days. And these young women immediately rose a most surprising number of degrees in Jimmy Rogers's estimation. He told one or two of them so.

Livingstone went, one afternoon about a week later, to call on a certain American girl in the avenue de l'Observatoire. He had quite forgotten Jimmy Rogers's missionary scheme, and was consequently very much surprised and not a little annoyed to find that young man drinking tea and acting, as it were, the combined showman and conversational buffer between Lawson and the girl.

When Livingstone entered the room the sculptor was seated on the edge of a deep-stuffed chair. He had carefully parted the skirts of his coat when he sat down, and they flowed voluminously to the floor on either side of him, like a woman's riding habit. He held his tea-cup, with a biscuit balanced on the saucer's edge, awkwardly before him, in stiff, unaccustomed hands, and his feet, freed at Jimmy Rogers's tactful hint from the yellow boots, shone resplendent in a vast expanse of patent leather. He was obviously ill at ease and very much embarrassed; but, instead of remaining silent and learning by observation how to conduct himself, he strove to cover this embarrassment and to make it plain how perfectly at home he was, by talking a great deal in a loud and nervous voice. Also, he made many foolish and unnecessary little faux pas, from which the exercise of a bit of tact might have saved him.

His nervousness increased as Livingstone entered, and he lost the spoon and the biscuit from his tea-saucer as he rose to his feet, along with Jimmy Rogers and the hostess. He had always disliked Livingstone, for no particular reason save that Livingstone was so far and away the most popular young man in Paris, and was, with no apparent effort, everything that Lawson had always wished to be, everything that Lawson was not. He had even felt a certain disadvantage in Livingstone's presence, and had taken

a malevolent pleasure in repeating to other men at the club or at the atelier that the other was, after all, nothing but an idle *poseur*, a silly young snob with more money than was good for him, who fancied himself in the rôle of social arbiter and drawing-room pet. But, for all this, he was ever ready to put an unnecessary amount of effusion into his replies to Livingstone's civil greetings and to pose as Livingstone's friend before the *nouveaux*.

He was very much annoyed that the "drawing-room pet" should have appeared at just this moment, for, in spite of his elaborate pretension, he knew well enough that he himself lacked something of social polish, though in what particular he could not He noted, with a lowering eye, Livingstone's perfect ease and assurance of manner in greeting the hostess and Jimmy Rogers and himself, and in taking his tea-cup and picking out the biscuits he liked, as if he gave no thought at all to how it would appear. Lawson could not understand this unconsciousness of bearing. He thought it must be another pose and he determined to show Livingstone that other people than himself could be at home in a drawing-room.

So, he sat forward in his chair again, rather flushed as to cheeks and bright as to eyes, and took upon himself the burden of the conversation. To do him justice, he was not, as a rule, a particularly vain or dictatorial man, but his unfamiliar surroundings and the desperate effort he was making to appear at his ease made him quite lose his head, and he became presently aware that no one but himself was saying anything beyond an occasional "yes" or "no."

The discovery gave him a warm little glow of triumph. They should see that he was as good as any of them. He shot a quick glance at Livingstone, but that gentleman's face expressed nothing but a grave and polite interrogation. He was, however, surprised to observe that Jimmy Rogers had turned somewhat red and appeared both uncomfortable and

restless. Perhaps he was not feeling well, or was thinking of something else. Lawson wished that Rogers would pay better attention, for he particularly wished his sponsor to see that he was doing him credit, as it were

Then, after a moment, Jimmy Rogers rose, setting his cup on the tea-table, and said that they must be going on.

"Going on?" cried Lawson, in dismay; "going on? Why, we haven't been here half an hour. Nonsense!" And the girl smiled politely and said that Mr. Lawson was quite right, they had hardly arrived yet. But Jimmy Rogers only turned a little redder and insisted that they must go, till he finally bore his grumbling protégé out of the room. It seemed to Lawson a rather absurd thing to put on a frock coat and go some distance for a call of half an hour's duration. He could not understand it at all.

When the two men had left, the girl turned about to Mr. Livingstone, dropping her hands into her lap and making a little face of half-amused relief.

"I am glad you came," said she, "very glad! It has been rather awful, really."

Livingstone laughed. "Jimmy has periods of being such an ass," he said. "I told him not to inflict this chap on people and a lot of others told him as well, but you can't convince Jimmy of anything. He thinks he is doing something very fine, something that he'll look back upon one day with satisfaction. As a matter of fact, he'll only get himself disliked by every one, including Lawson, if he doesn't even come some nasty cropper."

"Oh, I don't know," objected the girl. "Aren't you going it a bit strong? Of course, the man is atrociously impossible now, but he may learn the tricks. You're such a conservative," she smiled, "for a really very unconventional young man!"

Livingstone wagged a stubborn

"Never you mind about me," he said. "Just you mark my words; Jimmy will come a cropper with that colt of his. The man's not merely ignorant, he's not the right sort. You can't teach him anything, because he's quite certain that he knows it all, already. He is a good sculptor, I'm told, and I know that he's a good sort in other ways, but he doesn't here.'' And Livingstone waved an explanatory hand about the little drawing-room.

The girl seemed to be considering. "Oh, I don't know," she said, again. "I think you're a bit prejudiced, aren't you? Now, with some one to take him in hand, he might— After all, he's not so dreadful. They say he is one of the coming men, full of I like men who amount to something in their profession." She paused a moment, insultingly, to make this tell, but Livingstone refused to meet her eye. "And, beyond that," she went on, "he's rather handsome and—and generally attractive. He has a sort of force about him somewhere. I can't explain it; perhaps you know what I mean. It draws you, sort of— I wonder," she said, frowning thoughtfully, "I wonder if-I don't believe he has ever seen much of women."

"No?" said Mr. Livingstone, po-

litely.

"Well, not the right sort of women, anyhow," said the girl, turning pink. "I think it might be worth while for some woman to take him up, to see what is in him; yes, very worth while."

Livingstone made a little exclamation of disgust. "Well, I hope the woman won't be you," he declared, "or any other girl whom I know. I tell you, he's not the right sort. And I rise to remark," he continued, angrily, "that, if you won't talk about anything but that Lawson man, I shall go away. I didn't come here to talk about him; I came to tell you that that coaching party for next Friday is all arranged. I am to get Howlett's coach, you know, with that black pair, Polisson and Voyou, for leaders. They will probably run away, or tip us over or something, so it may be quite worth while. I'm going to drive. Will you sit with me? Jimmy's going, of course, and Lulu de Vignot and old lady Hartwell and the Honorable Molly and, I think, Dicky Cheltenham.'

"Sit with you?" cried the girl; "of course I'll sit with you! Are you quite sure you wish me to? You've such a deprecatory way of asking people to do things that they'd give their heads to do. I shall brag about it to every girl I know."

"Oh, rot!" said Livingstone. "Then it's all right. Friday, remember; ten o'clock. Now I'm off."

"Oh, are you going?" said the girl. "I wish you wouldn't. Good-bye, then. Oh, and I really didn't mean what I said, you know-about that Lawson man. Honestly, I didn't; I

was only joking. Good-bye."

Nevertheless, Livingstone, hurrying through the Luxembourg Gardens two days later, ran upon the girl in company with young Lawson. The two were strolling along one of the flowerbordered paths near the Watteau monument, and Lawson had returned to the dreadful yellow boots and had added a cravat of passionate red. The girl's color deepened perceptibly when she met Livingstone's astonished eyes, and she gave him a sidelong look in which amusement was blended with that expression seen most often upon the faces of very young people who have been caught stealing jam.

But Livingstone went on home to the studio in the Boulevard Montparnasse, using language unworthy of a gentleman, and there fell bitterly upon Jimmy Rogers, who was engaged in innocent pleasantry with

Marcus Aurelius.

"Whom do you suppose I've just seen strolling about together in the Luxembourg Gardens?" demanded Livingstone, hurling his stick and gloves on the floor, where they were at once seized upon in a spirit of jest by Marcus Aurelius, and thoroughly masticated.

"How should I know?" said his chum, watching the dog. "I'm no mind-reader."

"Well, it was your Lawson pal and Alison Cartwright," said Livingstone.

Jimmy Rogers stared.

The devil!" said he, very slowly. "And I hope you're satisfied," continued Livingstone, in a tone of illconcealed rage; "you, with your cursed missionary schemes! I've known you to do a lot of idiotic things from time to time, and I dare say I've told you so before, but this beats your own record! Do you realize what I said? Alison Cartwright walking about the Luxembourg Gardens with that underbred gorilla of a sculptor! I met Sara Bamborough yesterday, and she told me that you'd been at their house with the man. Got me in a corner, she did, and talked the silliest sort of rot about him for a quarter of an hour. She asked me if I'd ever noticed his wonderful eyes; said there was something fierce and primitive and compelling about him. Oh, she made me fairly ill!"

"Well, I don't see what you're attacking me about it for!" cried the exasperated Rogers, desperately. "If a lot of silly girls, who ought to know better, wish to act like fools over the man, let 'em! I'm not their nurse.

They're grown up, I suppose."

"It's all your fault!" insisted Livingstone, stubbornly. "They'd never have met the chap but for you. You're responsible for whatever may happen—and I'd like to tell you that I wouldn't care to have the responsibility on my shoulders, either. What if one of these girls goes and falls in love with him? What will you do then?"

"I'll jolly well brain him with an axe, that's what I'll do!" raved Rogers, wildly, "and I'll brain you, too, if you don't let me alone. Haven't I troubles enough, without your adding to them? I'd like to know what in heaven's name those girls see in him to make such a row over! He's a

good chap, as I've always said, and he deserves to go among the right people, but, my word! he's nothing to go mad over. What do they see in him?"

"Oh, I don't know," growled Livingstone. "I suppose he's different from the men they've known. Women always like something odd. They're always running off with coachmen and grooms and things, when there are plenty of the right sort of men about. If you should ask me, I should say, brain your man now, before the thing goes any further. Don't wait."

And, indeed, as time went on, Jimmy Rogers wished, more than once, that he had taken his chum's advice and brained the man in the beginning; for Lawson, by some strange freak of that lady, Fate, appeared to be making a veritable success in the easy-going social life of the colony. He quickly became independent of the aid and guidance of Jimmy Rogers and, aware of the rapid cooling of that young man's enthusiastic zeal, began to avoid him and to extend his acquaintance by other means.

Of course, there were many people who refused to receive Lawson, or, if it was possible, even to meet him at the club dances and teas and such, where they found themselves under the same roof. Also, many of the people, who had, through kindliness or curiosity in the beginning, taken him up, were driven, later on, to rid themselves of him, because of his constant exhibitions of tactlessness and gaucherie; for in these matters he seemed to make no improvement, his conceit and his utter inability to see his faults rendering any outside precept or example quite useless. he went to many houses and was often seen in public places by the perturbed Rogers, in company with young women who should have known better.

And among the young women, probably the most prominent was Miss Alison Cartwright. She had

made, on the occasion of the coaching trip to Versailles, a half-humorous attempt to explain the stroll in the Luxembourg Gardens, on the grounds that she had met Lawson on the street and that he had walked home with her through the gardens. But this explanation the disgusted Livingstone was so ungallant as to disbelieve in toto.

After this, however, she made no secret of her very obvious interest in the young sculptor. She was often seen with him on the street, and at teas and dances he seemed always to be at her side. He was such a fixture at the apartment in the avenue de l'Observatoire that Livingstone very pointedly ceased his calls there, and the distraught and lymphatic Mrs. Cartwright was, on all sides, besieged with inquiries as to her daughter's engagement.

Meantime, the relations at the studio in the Boulevard Montparnasse were strained to a painful degree. Jimmy Rogers went about under a pall of unlighted gloom, and his life was made utterly cheerless by the frequent and unbridled expression of his chum's feelings toward him. In point of fact, he was genuinely alarmed at the serious and wholly unexpected outcome of his well-meant endeavors. And Livingstone made it plain, with unnecessary repetition, where responsibility lay. Jimmy Rogers, himself, still persisted in his high opinion of the sculptor's qualities and legitimate claims upon society, and still insisted that the man was a diamond in the rough, and many other figurative things of the sort. some of Lawson's vigorous methods of warfare, and, above all, this last development involving Alison Cartwright, went quite beyond Jimmy's sense of fitness and worried him excessively.

So anxious did he become, as time went on, that, goaded to action one day by a particularly bitter attack from Livingstone, he took his courage in his hands and went to the avenue de l'Observatoire. He chose, for obvious reasons, a day which was not

Miss Cartwright's proper "afternoon," and he went early, on the better chance of finding her alone. The sculptor was, to his relief, not in evidence, but Miss Cartwright greeted his somber countenance with unconcealed mirth.

"Have you, too, come to plead with me?" she demanded. "Every one does, nowadays. Still, you know, you're not quite the one to do it, are you? You're the responsible party. Dear me, doesn't it weigh on you?"

"Oh, it's all very well to laugh," said Jimmy Rogers, gloomily, "but, I say, it's no laughing matter. Yes, if you like, it does weigh on me. I expect I shall have nervous prostration soon. Jerry gives me no peace. Very

bitter about it, Jerry is."

"Oh, Mr. Livingstone!" said the girl, and her smile somehow lost, for a moment, its spontaneity. "Yes, I suppose Mr. Livingstone would be bitter about it. He wouldn't understand, would he? He's such a conservative! He and Mr. Lawson never would understand each other, I fancy. Each of them is everything that the other is not; I—I think I'm sorry about Mr. Livingstone, a little."

"Do you know," said Jimmy Rogers, looking up into her face with puzzled, narrowed eyes, "do you know, I'd always fancied, somehow, that you and Jerry—that you'd rather—well, in fact, you know—"

The girl looked at him for an instant and then out of the window, and her

voice came lower.

"Had you?" said she; "had you? And—and he, Jerry? Had you fancied that he——?"

"Why," hesitated Jimmy Rogers, and turned red. "Why, I don't know. Why not? Of course, one can never tell about Jerry. There's that little enameled and jeweled cross thing he wears—that order. I suppose he—Well, he has always been different since he had that, but—"

"And," said the girl, rather low, looking once more into his face, "and

even if I did. What then?"

"Well, then, I just don't understand



all this present business!" cried Jimmy Rogers. "Is it possible that any one who's ever cared about Jerry Livingstone could care for—for this chap? Are you engaged to this Lawson man? That's what I want to know. Are

vou?"

But the girl laughed again, very amusedly. "No," she said; "no, I'm not. It's not at all like that. Dear me, I wonder how often I've had to answer that question in the last fortnight. I'm going to have a little placard printed and hung up on the wall here, or about my neck: 'No, I am not engaged to Albert Lawson, or to any one else!' Don't you think that would be a good thing? It would save me such a lot of explaining."

But Jimmy Rogers refused to be amused. "I don't understand it at all," said he, with a melancholy shake of the head. "If you're not engaged to him, or are not going to be, what do you see such a lot of him for? Eh,

what?"

The girl twisted a bit uneasily in her chair, and frowned out of the window. Her hands pulled and strained at the lace handkerchief that lay in

her lap.

"I don't know," she said, at last, pausing between the words. voice seemed puzzled and a little "Upon my word, I don't anxious. He—he's something something strange—perhaps, that is it. He's not the sort of man I've always known and gone about with. Yes, perhaps that is it. And yet I don't think it's that alone; I think there must be more, something deeper, more personal than all that. Upon my word, I don't know." She turned about to Jimmy Rogers, throwing out her two hands beside her in a little helpless gesture.

"He—interests me," she said, simply; "he interests me more than any man I've seen in a very long time. Oh, yes, I know what you would say, what they've all been saying—that he's not my sort, that he is loud and tactless and—yes, I'll be quite frank—

ill-bred. He is ill-bred. He is constantly doing things that grate on me horribly, but—there's something about him—I can't describe it; I can't name it. He's strong, somehow. He's big and deep and earnest and illimitably strong. He draws one."

She leaned forward in her chair, clasping and unclasping her hands, and her face, turned up toward Jimmy Rogers, was drawn and anxious and very eager. She had gone far beyond

joking.

"Oh, Mr. Rogers," she cried, "you know him better than these others know him. It was you who saw the man in him and brought him to our notice. Tell me why he attracts me so; tell me why I can't leave off thinking of him—why I want to be with him, to hear him talk, even when he boasts and brags so; tell me why he makes other men seem so futile and commonplace?"

Jimmy Rogers made a gesture of gloomy irritation. "Don't ask me!" said he. "How should I know? I'm nothing but a mere man. All I can say is that, if I thought you were in love with that chap, I'd murder him—even if it was I who brought him

here.'

"Oh, it's nothing like that," said she; "nothing at all like that. I'm in no danger of falling in love with him and I'm in no danger of marrying him. It's just—why, he interests me," she said again, looking at Jimmy Rogers with her anxious frown. She seemed to think that he should understand what no man has ever understood.

"He's strong," she said again, nodding, "and he's strange. He's something out of a world I've never known—I wonder if that's it. He leads a different life; he thinks different thoughts; he has quite another scale of values for—for things—I wonder if that's it? Women are queer, aren't they? But, oh, yes, he's very strong. I—sometimes I'm afraid, just a little. What if he should carry me off into his world? What if he should prove even stronger than I know?" She

was looking out of the window into the green tree-tops of the avenue de l'Observatoire and over them to the Luxembourg Gardens and the Palais beyond. She seemed almost to have forgotten that Jimmy Rogers was in the room.

"What if he should make me fall in love with him?" she said, smiling, with wide eyes, "faults and all, ill-breeding and conceit and gaucherie and coarseness and all! I wonder-I wonder-"

"Oh, drop it!" cried Jimmy Rogers, "Don't go on that way; irritably. you get on my nerves. I tell you he mustn't make you fall in love with him; it won't do. You know what I think of the man; you know why I brought him here and to other houses. I think he's a good sort, honest and earnest and talented and all that. think he deserves more consideration than he has ever had. I say that in time, a good bit of time, he may be fit to marry anybody. But, hang it, he isn't yet—not by a great deal! He doesn't belong. Jerry's right, in a way. Maybe I was a fool to take the man about. I hadn't any notion that anything like this would come of it. Fall in love with him, indeed! You couldn't if you should try."

"Oh, of course, you're right," said the girl, a bit wearily. "I didn't really mean what I said, you know—you're not really going? It's so early! Come again soon, won't you? I-I should be glad. Not so very many people come—any more. Mr. Livingstone doesn't come at all. Of course, it's all my fault, I know. Still—ah, well, good-bye."

At the door Jimmy Rogers met young Lawson and passed him with a scowling nod. He had some thought of turning back, but after a moment's hesitation decided that it would be inexcusably nasty of him, and so he went on, out into the street.

At the sound of Lawson's step the girl turned from the window where she had been standing, and a little flush came into her cheeks.

"Ah," she said, "it is you!" And if Jimmy Rogers had been there he would have cursed very bitterly at the tone, for it was softer than her ordinary voice, softer and lower—the tone that a woman unconsciously reserves for only one man.

"Oh, yes," said the sculptor; "yes, it's me, all right. Did you think I wouldn't come? I haven't been miss-

ing many days, have I?"

He raised her hand in his, very high, and gave it a single limp shake, a most absurd parody of a bygone fashion. The girl bit her lip to hide a smile and her cheeks flushed again, but with annoyance. He was at his worst in this sort of thing. All his manners, of which he had a distressing store, were laboriously acquired parodies. would have believed them burlesques, if the man's satisfaction with them had not been so obviously serious. natural handshake was quick and strong and quite without affectation; but from some unknown source he had acquired this new and ludicrous one. and exhibited it at every possible opportunity.

He sat down in a big chair by the window, parting the skirts of his coat and adjusting the knees of his trousers. The girl, moving the tea things about on the table by her side, watched him with a little frown. She was always able, in these first few moments, to consider the man critically, to be annoyed, and even disgusted, by his absurdities of manner; and to-day Jimmy Rogers's very emphatic language had put a certain edge on her critical faculty. It was only later, after he had begun to talk, after she had fallen under the spell of his strange attraction for her, that she forgot all things external, that she no longer saw the conscious awkwardness, the foolish little attempts to ape such men as Livingstone and Rogers and their set.

She watched him quite coolly, as she made the tea, and compared his bearing and manner with that of the man who had been sitting in the same chair ten minutes before, and it was not a very pleasant comparison. But from this she fell to watching his face, for, contrary to his habit, he was rather

quiet, speaking seldom, and his face was good. It had no great refinement of line, it was bold and roughhewn and square; but she found it satisfying. It was lined about the eyes and mouth and at the nostrils; but she liked these lines. They stood for strength and character, she thought. Any man could have told her at a glance that most of them stood for certain very disagreeable traits indeed, or were the result of a not over-creditable mode of life; but this she could not be expected to know.

"Mr. Rogers has been here," said she. "Did you meet him outside?"

The sculptor frowned over his tea. "Oh, yes, I met him," said he. "He didn't look very good-natured—gave me a scowl as he went out. I wonder if he thought I cared for his scowls. Rogers is a good-enough fellow, but he is apt to think a little too much of his own importance. Just now he has no use for me. He's jealous."

Miss Cartwright gasped. "Jealous?" she cried; "Jimmy Rogers jealous? For heaven's sake, about what?"

"Why, you!" said the sculptor; "you, of course! He and that Livingstone ass are all broken up because I've cut them out with you. They'd like to throw me into the river."

"Oh, what perfect nonsense!" cried the girl, sharply. "There has been no cutting out of anybody, nor anything of the sort; and I must ask you not to call Mr. Livingstone an ass, because he is not one and because he is a friend of mine, a much older friend than yourself."

Then, after a moment, she put out a hand toward the astonished and outraged Lawson, with a little smile of deprecation.

"Don't be angry!" she begged. "I didn't mean to be fierce, but you—you're not at your best saying things like that. I don't like to hear them. Don't you see that I wish you at your best always? Let us leave Mr. Rogers and Mr. Livingstone out of it and talk about something else. What have you been at work upon to-day?"

"Work?" said the sculptor, impa-

tiently; "I haven't been working at all. Why do you always want to talk about work? A man can't be slaving all the time. A man has his social relations to think of. I'm sick of clay. I'm going to take a rest. How can I work and think of you at the same time?" he concluded, felicitously.

Miss Cartwright turned her face away, to hide a not altogether delighted expression. She knew that all this was mere affectation, for Lawson, in spite of much that might be said in criticism of him, was a hard and conscientious worker, and she could not understand why he should choose this silly pose of a flaneur. Decidedly, he was not at his best to-day.

"I don't wish you to work and think of me at the same time," she said. "I wish you to think of me only when you are not working. And I do wish you to work. That's the best of you, don't you know?—your work. It's the best of any man-what he can do. Please don't be sick of clay. You're too much the master of it for that. You're to be great some day, and I'm to think that I have had a little bit of a part in it. We settled that long ago, don't you remember? Yes, you're to be great and famous, and I'm to be so proud just to know you! But you've a lot of work to do. Now, tell me all about that fountain sketch for Chicago. If only they'll take your design! Wouldn't it be a splendid chance? Wouldn't it, though?"

So, by dint of coaxing and a little flattery and a great deal of cleverness in suggesting the things which meant much to him, she started him on the subject of his work. And, as he went on, her eyes grew wide and deep and her breath came quicker, for here he was the man who had won so strange an influence over her. He forgot all his foolish manners, all his affectations and poses. They dropped from him like a garment, and he was, all at once, keen and strong and earnest and genuine—arrogant, over-certain of himself, as most strong men are, but this she rather liked than criticized. If only he might be always like this! If only

she might make him see how fine this side of him was and how belittling the other!

He talked for nearly an hour, and the girl listened, eager and alert. Then, at last, when he had finished, she gave a little sigh and dropped her hands into

her lap.

"Yes," she said; "yes, I see. You make one see. It will be very good. Yes, you make one see—and feel. You're very strong. I was telling some one so, not very long since. Ah, well, now you must go, I'm afraid. I'm dining out, across the river, and I've to dress. Mother is always so disgusted when I'm late."

She rose and gave him her hand, smiling up into his face with that little mixture of admiration and—something else. He could not tell

what else.

But the sculptor moved nearer, taking the hand in both his own, and "Yes," he rong. I'm held her eyes with his. said, "I'm strong—very strong. too strong for the rest of them, Livingstone and Rogers and all those. I'm strong enough to take you away from them and keep you away. Don't listen to them when they talk to you about me. Oh, I know well enough that they do, all of them; I hear of it, often. That is what Rogers was here for, to-day. They say I don't They say that I'm not belong here. your kind, that you're making yourself ridiculous by going about with me. I tell you they're afraid of me. Don't you listen to them!" His speech, for all its arrogance and vanity, rang true. It was not the cheap vanity that so often marred him, and there was no pose about it.

"I'm strong enough to take you away from them," he said again. "I'll make myself your kind. You

shall see."

The girl looked up into his face, square and set and frowning a little,

and her breath quickened.

"I wonder," she said, very low, and her voice was uncertain, "I wonder if you could take me—away from them. I wonder if—you're strong enough for that. Sometimes—I think you are. I—I don't—care for you—you know. Oh, not a bit; not the least bit—that way. But I wonder if you could—do it. They'd be amazed, wouldn't they? They'd never get over it, would they? They don't like you, you know. That is because they don't know you as—as I do. Even mother doesn't like you. I'm a great trial to her, nowadays. Oh, yes, you're very strong! I wonder——"

"I'll make you care!" said young Lawson, grimly. And still his good angel stood by him, for he brought out none of his silly mannerisms to weaken him. He was very much in earnest.

"I give you leave to—try," said she.

"Ah, but not now! You must go now, please. I have to dress, you know. Good-bye—ah, good-bye. No! no!" He had raised to his lips the hand he held, but the girl snatched it suddenly from him, with crimson cheeks. The touch of his lips sent a little shudder of repulsion all through her, as if he had been something unclean

The sculptor laughed and turned away. He thought it was merely a bit of girlish timidity. He had seen much the same thing before in other women. But, when he had gone out of the room, the girl stood staring at the portières with wide eyes, and her cheeks were still crimson. Unconsciously she rubbed with her handkerchief the hand that he had kissed, as if she were wiping off some stain.

Two days after this there was a dance given by a certain very well known English painter, who had a house with a great walled garden, in the rue Notre Dame des Champs. The painter's wife had asked young Lawson to the dance, because it was a big and not too exclusive affair, and because the painter, who was a democratic man, had told her that the young sculptor was interesting and talented, and deserved encouragement.

Some time about midnight, Jimmy

Rogers, who had just had a prospective and very pretty dance partner cut out from under his very arm by a man whom he disliked, was making for the buffet to drown his sorrow in drink. His way led him past one of the long French windows that stood open upon the garden, only a few inches above the level of the turf. From outside came the cool night air, with the gleam of many orange-paper lanterns and an occasional burst of laughter or the sound of a raised voice.

Then, all at once, from the soft gloom just beyond the window, came a scuffle of steps on the gravel and a smothered scream, low and very angry. Jimmy Rogers paused involuntarily, and, an instant later, a woman in white burst in through the window.

It was Miss Alison Cartwright and she was in a state of very obvious agitation. She did not at first see Jimmy, but turned, once she was inside, and looked back over her shoulder into the darkness from which she had come. She was shaking all over, and her cheeks blazed crimson. She scrubbed at one of them with her lace handkerchief, and her eyes were bright and angry.

Then young Lawson appeared in the window. He was half-laughing, half-puzzled, as if he could not make the situation out at all.

"Oh, come," he cried, "don't make such a row! It ain't anything. Why, what do you care? Come along!" The girl turned away from him, still breathing stormily, and her eyes fell on Jimmy Rogers. She went up to him at once, putting out a hand on his arm, but her eyes still rested on the awkward, embarrassed figure in the window.

"He—he tried to—kiss me!" she said, faintly. And her hand with its little lace handkerchief scrubbed again involuntarily at one flushed cheek. "The—brute! the brute! He tried to—kiss me!" She turned her angry eyes up to Jimmy Rogers's face and her hand closed fiercely upon his arm.

"Will you—thrash that—that person, Mr. Rogers?" she said; "and

have him turned out into the street? He is not—not fit to be here. Oh!" She shivered and her face drew into a contortion of disgust. She was very, very angry and quite unstrung.

"But I say, I—I don't—understand!" stammered the man in the window. "You said—you— How did I know you didn't want— What are you in such a rage about? Why, confound it, I——"

Jimmy Rogers offered his arm to the

girl.

"May I take you to Mrs. Cartwright?" he asked, pleasantly. He jerked his head toward the other man

as they moved away.

"You stop here, please," said he.
"I've something to say—something to
say to you." Then, when he had
left Alison Cartwright beside her
somnolent and nodding chaperon, he
moved briskly off toward the open
window, with a smile of pleased anticipation brightening his youthful
countenance.

An hour later, Gerald Livingstone, who had found the dance rather dull, was gloomily making his way homeward along the Boulevard Montparnasse. The café at the foot of the Boulevard Raspail was still alight, and upon its terrace a solitary and dejected figure in evening dress sat huddled behind one of the little tables.

Livingstone glanced sharply at the man's face and was for passing on with no word, but something in the forlorn bearing held him against his will. He paused a moment, frowning, and finally turned and dropped into a chair across the table. The sculptor raised a dull eye. His appearance was somewhat disheveled.

"I've been thrashed," said he, simply, "thrashed and turned out into the street."

"Yes," said Livingstone, looking rather awkwardly away; "yes, I—know."

Lawson rubbed a hand across his brow and rested his head on the hand. "Why?" said he. And his eyes were, as they had been before, puzzled and uncomprehending, almost pitiful. "What have I done?" he demanded. "I didn't do anything out of the way. What was all the row about? Why should she go into such a rage? I didn't expect she was going to take it like that. She told me, just the other day, that I-I had her permission to —make her care for me—if I could. Then I tried to—well, to kiss her hand, and she snatched it away and turned red. I thought she was shy. And to-night—why I only tried to kiss her, out there under those lanterns, and she —Jove, she went all to pieces! What did she do that for? What's the harm in kissing a girl? It ain't any crime, is it? Seems like she couldn't bear me to touch her, and yet she why, the way she used to talk, you'd think—what the devil is it, anyhow?" He drew his hand again across his face, and his eyes, still puzzled and uncomprehending, besought the other "What is it? There isn't anything the matter with me, is there—is there? I'm no Zulu or Hottentot. Maybe I haven't been about with the people that you and Rogers live among. Maybe I'm awkward and don't know how to act in a drawing-room, but what's that? Girls don't cry and go into rages and have a fit when you try to kiss them. Where's the difference? I can't see it. Where's the difference?"

Livingstone stirred about, uneasily, in his chair. "Oh, I—I don't know!" said he. "I—shouldn't think so much of it, if I were you. I'm—well, I'm beastly sorry about it all—to-night, you know. I dare say she—I dare say she was a bit nervous. She—wasn't expecting anything like that, probably. Of course, Jimmy had to do what she—wanted. As for—oh,

well, the rest of it, you know, it'sit's hard to say anything about it." He raised the glass of liqueur and squinted through it, scowling uncomfortably. "We-we're rather a useless lot," said he, "rather a foolish lot, the crowd of us that does little else than play about, and I suppose we lay too much stress on little things that aren't, after all, so important; little things in the way of breeding and custom and—and all that sort of thing, don't you know? I suppose it's a bit hard, to see just our point of view, unless one's been born to it. dare say it's not much of a point of view, anyhow. Perhaps you—you're just the least bit out of-out of your element, you know, with us. worth a dozen of us, you see. serious and full of talent and—and all that sort of thing. You haven't had time to cultivate the points we think are important. See what I mean? I'm talking awful rot, I expect, but it's something on that line. A chap can't step out of one world into another and be quite at home. Everything depends on the point of view, doesn't it? Wonder if any of this makes sense? I expect not."

The sculptor shook his head, wearily, and gave a little sigh. "I don't understand," said he; "I don't understand it at all. It's—beyond me, somehow. I ought to have stuck to my clay-punching, oughtn't I? I didn't belong here, probably, among you people. You're not my kind, after all. I don't know your language. I didn't belong."

"No," said Mr. Livingstone, nodding his head slowly; "I expect that is it. I'm sorry. No; I expect you didn't belong."



CURIOUS TO KNOW

CORA—I shall never marry.

LAURA—What's his name?

FLEURETTE

(AN EPITAPH)

By Theodosia Garrison

THIS is she who was Fleurette—
Something hardly woman, just
One to smile at, scarce to trust;
Something delicate, unstyled
'Twixt a flower and a child,
Too exquisite to regret—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
She whose laughter was as light
As the moon snow in the night;
She whose heart was like a bird
At a whisper thrilled and stirred,
Bird-like ready to forget—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
She whose gay eyes never knew
One harsh tear to stain their blue;
She whose lips were never lent
Save to kiss or merriment,
Just for mirth and music set—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
She who never woman-wise
Carried love in her sweet eyes;
If she knew it—ah, who knows?
Can we ask love from a rose,
Pity from a violet?—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
Flower-like she lived and died
One brief Springtime glorified;
Something far too fair to stay
For the coming of things gray
When the winds of Winter fret—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
To be sighed for, wished for, say
As a rose of yesterday;
Thought of 'twixt a smile and sigh,
Yet to-day, I wonder why
As I smile my eyes are wet—
Fleurette.



THE FOOL AND LOVE

THE Fool wandered, disconsolate, along the thoroughfare called Life. He was a fool because his whole career had been one of failure; he was disconsolate, not because he was a fool, but because there are so many things in this world from which a fool is precluded.

He came to a place where men played at the game called "money-getting." Great fortunes were amassed by shrewd, businesslike methods. Plan after plan matured into gold, and, as the Fool looked on, he sighed.

"Alas," said he, "intelligence is necessary if one is to play at this game,

and everybody knows that a fool has no intelligence."

He passed on until he came to a place where men were engaged at the game known as "fame-winning." Many struggled toward different goals. He noted how they overcame obstacle after obstacle; endured hardship after hardship; withstood temptation after temptation; but never lost sight of their purpose.

"Alas," he sobbed, "I cannot play this game, for it demands an all-absorb-

ing ambition, and a fool never possessed such an ambition."

Then the Fool passed on and arrived at a place where men and women played the game of Love. There were many men wearing their lives away in an endeavor to win riches, with which to gratify the idle whims of the women they loved. Others received but laughter and scorn, though they gave their very heart's blood.

Long and attentively the Fool watched the game and the players, marking

well the different methods of play. And he laughed, joyously.

"Here, at last, is a game I can play," he said, "for a heart is the only requirement, and even a fool possesses a heart."

And as he entered his name in the lists, he added:

"Here I shall stand a fair chance, for, in very truth, all men are fools when it comes to this game of Love."

Louis E. Thayer.

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IN A CLOSE PLACE

"HOW do you manage to live within your income, Briggs? Don't you feel cramped?"

"Cramped, did you say? Why, I have to go out and borrow ten dollars every time I want to stretch myself."

LE PALETOT NOISETTE

Par Louis Faran

ON-SEULEMENT Maurice et Paul étaient amis d'enfance, non-seulement ils avaient fait ensemble les mêmes études et s'étaient plus tard associés dans la même maison d'affaires, non-seulement l'année précédente ils s'étaient mariés à quelques jours de distance, épousant les deux cousines, deux ravissantes personnes, Marthe et Valentine, mais encore Maurice et Paul possédaient chacun un paletot noisette identique.

Ce jour-là, après avoir pris congé de Marthe, Maurice se dirigeait vers son bureau d'affaires, lorsqu'au détour de la première rue un commissionnaire, qui le guettait sans doute, lui remit une lettre hâtivement et disparut.

Surpris, Maurice décacheta la mystérieuse missive; une écriture grossière

y avait tracé ces quelques mots:

MON VIBUX CAMARADE:

Ce soir on soupe chez moi; il y aura beaucoup de tes anciens amis; si le cœur t'en dit—tu connais l'adresse!

Ta toujours dévouée, Rosa.

Pendant une ou deux minutes, le jeune homme resta abasourdi, se répétant ce nom qui ne lui rappelait rien; puis, tout à coup, la lumière se fit brusquement.

Rosa!

Il se souvenait bien maintenant d'une très jolie fille qu'il rencontrait autrefois dans les parties de plaisir faites avec des amis et qui avait joué un rôle dans sa vie de garçon.

D'un mouvement de colère, il fit disparaître le petit billet dans une poche de son paletot noisette et lacéra l'enveloppe en menus morceaux qu'il

jeta dans le ruisseau.

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Avait-elle perdu l'esprit, cette Rosa, d'oser s'imaginer que lui, un homme sérieux, un homme marié—et marié avec une femme charmante—il allait encore à des soupers galants?

Et, tout en haussant les épaules, il

se remit à marcher.

Rosa!

Ce nom, à lui seul, évoquait toute sa jeunesse très folle, et à certains souvenirs gais qui lui revenaient à la mémoire Maurice ne pouvait s'empêcher de sourire.

Quand il arriva enfin à son bureau, Paul s'y trouvait déjà, mais, très affairés et entourés d'ailleurs de tout leur personnel, les deux amis n'eurent pas le loisir de causer ensemble, sinon pour convenir à la hâte au théâtre où ils devaient se rendre le soir avec leurs femmes.

Paul partit le premier, et Maurice, tout en terminant son courrier quotidien, songea à l'invitation qu'il venait de recevoir.

Il sentait bien qu'il ne pouvait, qu'il ne devait l'accepter, et, pourtant, malgré lui, une curiosité avide le

poussait, l'attirait.

Mais, après tout, serait-ce si criminel? Quel tort ferait-il à Marthe en assistant à ce souper? Serait-il le premier mari qui, après avoir reconduit sa femme, trouverait un prétexte plausible pour s'éloigner quelques heures? En quoi aimerait-il moins Marthe parce qu'il irait un instant rire avec d'anciens compagnons?

Et partagé entre sa conscience et cette tentation du fruit défendu, qui, brusquement, lui était venue, Maurice

restait perplexe.

Mais, tout à coup, secouant la tête:

"Bah! n'y pensons plus; j'agirai au moment même, selon l'inspiration!"

Et se levant il prit son chapeau et son vêtement; mais en endossant son paletot noisette il éprouva dans l'entournure des manches une certaine gêne.

"Allons," pensa-t-il, "Paul se sera trompé et aura pris le mien; nous referons l'échange ce soir après le thé-

atre."

II

QUELQUES heures plus tard les deux jeunes couples se retrouvaient dans une première loge au Vaudeville.

La pièce, très bien jouée, était d'un intérêt captivant, et assis derrière Marthe, qui n'avait jamais été plus jolie que ce soir-là, Maurice en avait presque oublié l'invitation de Mademoiselle Rosa.

Des amis se trouvant dans la salle, lui et Paul allaient les voir pendant les entr'actes ou les recevaient dans leur loge, et la soirée s'écoula charmante.

Maurice et Marthe venaient de remonter en voiture, et la portière s'était à peine refermée sur eux, que la jeune femme, se retournant vers son mari:

"Regarde cela: n'est-ce pas indigne?" exclama-t-elle avec force en lui tendant d'une main qui tremblait le petit billet de Mademoiselle Rosa.

Maurice sentit que son cœur cessait de battre. Il voulut pousser un cri, mais n'en eut pas la force; il resta abîmé, éperdu, hébété, sans trouver un seul mot à dire.

Il avait pu, en recevant cette invitation inattendue, être pris d'un vertige de folie et admettre un instant la possibilité d'accepter; mais, maintenant, il comprenait toute l'horreur d'une telle conduite. Marthe avait vraiment le droit de le haīr ou de le mépriser. Et, dans une vision brève et atroce, il vit l'amour de cette adorable créature perdu pour lui.

"C'est affreux!" répétait Marthe

avec énergie.

Il n'eut même pas l'idée de s'excuser, de se justifier. "Affreux!" murmura-t-il, machinalement, après elle, comme un écho plaintif.

Il se fit encore un instant de silence; puis, la jeune femme, se laissant aller dans le fond de la voiture:

"Pauvre Valentine!" soupira-t-elle.

Maurice sursauta.

"Valentine! Pourquoi cela?"

Marthe se redressa brusquement. "Pourquoi cela? Vous voilà bien, vous autres hommes! Son mari est en relations avec Mademoiselle Rosa, et vous dites: 'Pourquoi cela?'"

Maurice, perdu de plus en plus, se demandait s'il ne devenait pas fou.

"Paul?" s'écria-t-il malgré lui.

"Mais oui, Paul, ton ami Paul! Cela te surprend, hein? C'est au dernier entr'acte que nous avons fait cette dé-Et, baissant un peu la voix: "C'est pendant que vous étiez sortis. Valentine, qui voulait rematter la broche de son corsage, a égratigné son doigt avec l'épingle, et comme le sang jaillissait et qu'elle avait peur de tacher son mouchoir de dentelles, elle m'a demandé de lui passer celui de son mari qui devait se trouver dans son paletot. Naturellement, je veux faire ce qu'elle me dit; je me lève, je vais à la patère où Paul avait accroché son vêtement avec la capeline de sa femme, je plonge la main dans la poche du paletot, mais au lieu du mouchoir, je n'en retire que ce chiffon de papier. Malgré moi, ces lignes écrites en gros me sautent aux yeux, et je ne puis retenir une exclamation. Là-dessus, Valentine se rapproche.

"'Qu'est-ce que c'est? qu'est-ce qu'il y a?" Et elle voit à son tour le billet. C'était horrible, n'est-ce pas? pour cette pauvre femme! Tout à coup, heureusement, il m'est venu une idée, une inspiration sublime—mais juremoi que tu ne vas pas me gronder, que tu me pardonneras."

"Quoi donc?"

"Eh bien! j'ai compris qu'un mensonge seul pouvait sauver Valentine et Paul, et j'ai menti."

"Comment?"

"Je me suis souvenue à cet instant que vous aviez tous deux le même paletot noisette, et je me suis écriée: 'Mais c'est à Maurice, cela! c'est le vêtement de Maurice!'''

"Et alors?" interrogea le jeune

homme, qui ne respirait plus.

"Alors, le plus extraordinaire, c'est qu'elle l'a cru, instantanément, sans l'ombre de difficulté. C'était invraisemblable pourtant; c'était bien le paletot de Paul; il n'y avait pas à en douter. Mais les femmes sont naives," ajouta-t-elle d'un petit air de supériorité, "et pensent toujours que ces choses-là peuvent arriver aux autres plutôt qu'à elles-mêmes!"

Maurice dissimula un sourire; alors Marthe se rapprocha de lui, et d'une

voix tendre:

"Dis, tu ne m'en veux pas d'avoir

"Mais non, ma chérie. Tu as bien fait. Ce n'était pas, d'ailleurs, un si gros mensonge."

"Ce méchant Paul, crois-tu qu'il

ira à ce souper?"

"Non, ma chère enfant, tranquillise-toi. Il n'ira pas, je te le jure. Qu'il en ait eu un instant la pensée, c'est possible, mais au dernier moment un homme doit sentir toute l'indignité d'un tel projet, et n'est ni assez fou ni assez lâche pour l'exécuter."

Il avait parlé avec tant de feu, de conviction, que la jeune femme, rassurée, poussa un petit soupir de sou-

lagement.

"Alors, j'ai bien fait, et tout est pour le mieux! Il n'y a que la foi qui sauve, et c'est une bonne chose d'avoir un bandeau sur les yeux. Cette pauvre Valentine, tout de même, si elle savait!"

"Mais elle pardonnerait, peut-être."
Marthe bondit: "Pardonner! Ah!
non, par exemple! On ne pardonne
pas cela!"

"Alors, si au lieu de ton amie, admettons que c'eût été toi; tu n'aurais pas pardonné?" questionna

Maurice avec hésitation.

"Jamais!" répondit-elle avec une sincérité et une énergie qui firent

pâlir le jeune homme.

Puis, d'un joli mouvement câlin, se blottissant tout contre lui: "Mais je sais bien que cela ne serait pas arrivé, et vois-tu, quand bien même je l'aurais vu de mes propres yeux, il me semble que je ne l'aurais pas cru."

Très ému, Maurice avait passé un bras autour de sa taille, et, se penchant vers ce joli visage qui se levait vers lui, il posa ses lèvres sur le front de la jeune femme; lorsque la voiture s'arrêta enfin devant leur porte, le baiser durait encore.

III

Un peu plus tard, comme dans un élégant déshabillé de soie rose, Marthe, assise devant sa psyché, déroulait ses lorgs cheveux:

"Dis donc, Maurice," conclut-elle avec un rire gai, "c'est tout de même heureux que vous ayez eu le pareil

paletot noisette!"

"Oh! oui, bien heureux!" répondit le jeune homme d'un accent qui venait du cœur.



UNSETTLED AS USUAL

I THOUGHT for the Summer we'd quite settled down Within the snug cottage we moved to in May, But my wife feels unsettled, and so out of town To mountain or shore she's determined to stray. I bravely demur, but insistent is she—What use are objections when fair woman wills?—She has settled on going, she says, so, you see, The whole affair's settled—excepting the bills.

R. F. G.

ON A FAN

IVORY, smooth and bright,
Covered with satin white,
Whereon in pink delight
Cupid reposes—
Think of the dainty screen
Picturing such a scene!
Doesn't that surely mean
Romance and roses?

Such is Myrtilla's fan.
What could be dearer than
This to the happy man,
Who, once behind it,
In a true lover's way
Without the least delay,
Kissed her and heard her say
She didn't mind it?

That is what chanced to be My luck one time when she Laughingly bantered me, Saying: "You know, sir, Flirting is lots of fun When with a fan 'tis done, If you remember—one Kiss for a blow, sir.

FELIX CARMEN.

26

A DANGER SIGNAL

BOBBIE—Pa, is red a sign of danger?
COLONEL RUMBLOSSOM—Yes; I believe so.
"Then why don't you sign the pledge?"



DIDN'T WANT CRACKERS

THERE once was a young lady Dr.
Who owned a bad parrot that mr.
He would likewise blaspheme,
Using language extreme—
All of which, so the lady said, shr.

W. J. PRICE



WHY?

By the Baroness von Hutten

THE coffin stood by the fireplace, which was filled with expressionless, white chrysanthemums

Through the open window came a warm, damp breeze, mingled with the smell of flowers; and the sunlight, filtering in through lace curtains, shivered in a fragile pattern across the polished floor and drew brightness out of the faded eastern rug.

He sat in a deep leather chair facing the fire-place. His face was white and bore a look of being too

old for the years it had seen.

His hair, pushed back from the high, clever brow, was brown and of that silky fineness given chiefly to men with something of woman's softness in their nature.

In the coffin lay his wife.

He had loved her and once had thought that she, too, loved him. Then came The Other—a man vulgar, given to extrait de violettes and jeweled cravat pins; a man with thick lips, unmodeled in the corners, and long eyelashes.

But such as he was she had loved him, and for him the real nature of her had awakened; for him she had left the man she had married. She had broken her husband's heart, ruined his life, and now, after years of silent absence, had come back to

him to die.

And he was wondering why she had come.

The sun faded away and rain fell gently, hushed by the tender young foliage.

He rose and stood by the coffin, looking down at her.

She was dead, gone, finished. He believed in no epilogue to the bitter comedy of Life.

"Ita est," he said, aloud, smiling gently. Then he continued studying

her face.

The rough curly hair, spiraling about her temples, was streaked with blue-gray. The closed eyes were a trifle sunken; but the greatest change of all was in her mouth.

It had been a fine, slight-lipped mouth, in other days, with deepimbedded corners and a curve outward from the chin.

Now it bore a new and inscrutable smile as he looked at her.

The lips were fuller and the corners relaxed. It had become a coarse mouth. "His influence!"

Then he bent closer. "And yet it is a happier mouth than she had with me—worse, but happier."

He remembered that that other mouth had rarely smiled and never

laughed.

This one—he could almost see it stretch unrestrainedly in broad merriment; he could almost see the expressive, crooked, white teeth, framed in the new curves.

He started; he seemed to hear the

loud laugh.

Then the door opened, and The Other came in. "Hush!" he said, imperiously. "I've a right to come."

The husband looked at him, curiously. "I admit no right," he answered, "but I won't kick you out. And—you might tell me what your 'right' is?"

The face of The Other was coarser than it had been seven years ago.

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His clothes were ill-brushed, and on one hand he wore a large diamond.

He stood in silence by the coffin for a few minutes. Then he spoke. "Yes, I'll tell you my right. I stuck to her through it all.

"You stuck to her!"

"Yes. I know what you think of me, and you are nearer right than wrong, but I did my best. seven years now, and she—cared for me to the end. And I loved her just as long—as she was yours. you see?"

"I see. Then you didn't love her?" The rain came down harder; the husband shut the window gently.

"No. And—such an affair is a drag on a man. You didn't divorce

"No, I didn't divorce her."

There was a long pause. Then The Other went on, harshly: "I stuck to her, in spite of everything; and you may not believe it, but she was happy with me."

'I do believe it; I see it in her

face."

"Then-I wonder why she came back to you to die? I was to come home the next day, and yet, as soon as she knew, she came to you. She couldn't stand you while she lived."

The husband smiled. "I, too, have

been wondering as to that."

"Well, it's no use wondering.

go now. Poor Jessie!"

Luchand rose. "Let us shake hands," he said. "You have not been much, but I think that, on the whole, you have been the best of the three.

They shook hands, and The Other went his way. The faces of both were grave with useless questioning.

But she in the coffin still smiled, as she had smiled before.



A WOMAN'S "NO"

CHE answered, "No." It gave me pain; But did she mean the sweet disdain That made her lustrous eyes more bright? I knew, if not her chosen knight, My love for her could never wane.

Awhile I brooded, hapless swain! And then for solace was I fain: Had I a rival in her sight? She answered, "No."

Still liked I not my love's refrain. A thought! I'd make it fit my strain! Again unto my heart's delight I strove to put the question right: "Sweet, must I always sue in vain?" She answered, "No."

SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.



TO the bashful man all the world is one great eye.

MRS. CHISHOLM'S COMPANION

By Julie M. Lippmann

OBERT DUANE, New York City, New York." The new arrival entered his name on the hotel register in a square, firm hand, and then followed the hall-boy through a labyrinth of corridors to the suite that had been assigned him. He was somewhat tired and exceedingly bored; but as these conditions had long since become chronic, they did not detain him, and he began immediate preparations for a bath and a change of clothing. done, he sat down before a somewhat unsteady escritoire that had obviously never been designed for the use of such a long-legged individual as himself, and began a letter to his sister at home. He must tell her of his journey, uneventful as it had been. He had covered two sheets of the paper when the pen abruptly ceased its rapid, nervous travel, and he shoved back his chair with an impulse of impatience. The next instant he rose and stalked to the window in a mood of sudden exasperation. Here it was again—the old demon of ennui that he had thought he could outstrip in his race across the continent. He could endure it when It lay passive, as it sometimes did; but when it rose and confronted him with its sickening influence, life seemed to him infected and nauseating, and he turned with disgust from everything it had to offer. Yet he was fully aware that life had still a great deal to offer him. Perhaps one of the reasons for his being in his present plight was his belief, at times, that he had nothing to struggle for, nothing to aspire to, which he could not easily attain just by stretching out his hand. His for-

tune lay within his grasp and therefore it did not allure him.

The large French windows, leading from his sitting-room to the balcony outside, were open, and through them came the sound of the surf breaking ceaselessly upon the coast beyond, and the soft, clean smell of the sea and the heavy perfume of many roses. He leaned against the window-frame and looked out on the paths and parterres of the elaborate, tropical hotel-garden just beneath him; yet he scarcely saw them.

Suddenly, he became conscious that he was watching two figures below and that he was feeling a certain curiosity as to who they were and why the white-haired invalid in the heavywheeled chair did not employ a male servant to propel her, instead of permitting that distinguished-looking The white-haired invalid girl to do it. had a face like a death-mask; she sat stiffly upright in her chair and did not even turn her head when her companion bent over to speak *5 her.

"A helpless paralytic perhaps," Duane surmised.

The companion was a noticeably beautiful girl. She was tall and nobly built, carrying her head as if it wore a crown. Her hat somewhat obscured her face from him, but he caught a glimpse of a great mass of dusky hair, the outline of a straight, short nose and the curves of a rounded cheek and chin. She was simply dressed, but her clothes were obviously well made. She walked, too, in a distinguished manner, in spite of the heavy-wheeled chair that she pushed before her. a moment she had rolled it out of

Duane's sight, around the sweep of the veranda, toward the hotel entrance, and he found himself gazing vacantly, with a feeling of almost childish disappointment and chagrin, at the point where it had disappeared. The pair had diverted him for a moment and now they were gone. He turned back into the room, reseated himself at the unsteady little escritoire and hurriedly drew his letter to a close.

As he opened the door on his way down-stairs to the office, he heard the muffled sounds of rubber-tired wheels on the hard floor of the corridor beyond, and in another instant the invalid's chair, with its occupant and her companion, appeared around the angle of the hall and slowly made its way in his direction. He closed his door deliberately and made no haste in turning the key in the lock. By the time he had finished his very leisurely performed operations, the wheeled chair had reached him, passed on and stopped at the door of the suite next his own. lingered a moment to attach his key to a silver ring he drew from his pocket, and then slowly retreated down the hall in the direction of the elevator.

He had ample opportunities during the evening to satisfy himself on the subject of his neighbors. He early discovered they were the objects of much gossip and a great deal of diversity of opinion. From the mass of conflicting testimony he made his own deductions

Mrs. Chisholm was, as he had suspected, a helpless paralytic. vaguely remembered having heard in New York that she had become an invalid from the shock she had suffered at the death of her only child, a son, who was tragically killed in a railway accident some years before. as the daughter of a multi-millionaire and the widow of the senior partner of the firm of Chisholm & Arnold, bankers, New York and London, was a woman of considerable means. husband and son were dead, and she apparently had no family ties. If any bond existed between her and her relations, it must have been singularly weak, for it appeared that she lived alone, attended only by her companion, Beulah Brooke, the girl whom Duane had seen. No one seemed to know who Miss Brooke was or whence she came. Unmistakably, she was indispensable to her employer; she was fully in her confidence and controlled most of her affairs. It was at this point in their surmises that the gossips shook their heads and raised their eyebrows. Duane pitied the girl. Adventuress or not, it must be deeply humiliating to be made the object of such insinuations; to be ignored by the women and discussed familiarly by the men; to be treated as a mere servant in one case, or as a sordid schemer in another. Duane resolved to stand by the girl if he could and to protect her, so far as was in his power, from the slanderous tongues that were busy with her name. He admired fair play. He would give her the benefit of the doubt and believe her, until she proved otherwise, an honest woman. And if she proved otherwise-why, then there might be something he could do for her helpless victim. It somehow gave an interest to life to feel so definite an impulse. He meant to act upon it if the opportunity offered. And the opportunity did offer.

Some cigars his sister had given him before he left home proved so good that he managed, without much effort, to "hold out over Sunday," as he had said. Indeed, even the Sunday after found him still content, and many Sundays following.

In the meantime, he succeeded in the difficult task of gaining an introduction to Mrs. Chisholm. It appeared she had known his mother well in days gone by, and on this basis she accepted him as a sort of attendant squire in their strictly exclusive rambles about the grounds. He read to her, chatted with her, showed her the photographs he had taken along his route, and exerted himself, as he had not done for years, to make a fellowcreature happy. But, though he made headway with Mrs. Chisholm, he seemed never to progress an inch with her

companion. At first she appeared merely shy, reticent and unresponsive; but, as time went on and he grew in intimacy with her employer, he thought he detected a change in the girl's demeanor toward him. Her large, dark eyes regarded him with a deep look he could not fathom, and she was obviously ill at ease when he was present. By degrees it dawned on him that she was jealous of him; that she resented his popularity with Mrs. Chisholm, and that she was trying to prevent it. She put little obstructions in the way of their meeting. She gradually altered the daily programme so that when he had retired to his rooms she and her charge would slip out into the grounds, and when he strolled about outdoors they were invariably closeted within. He could not avoid realizing that all this was not accomplished without calculation. Regarded in the most lenient light, the girl was plainly not ingenuous. That much he was compelled to admit to himself; but he admitted it only after a fierce struggle. He ardently wished to believe in her. Indeed, he had come to believe that if he lost his faith in her, if he found her to be base, he must suffer as he had thought he could never suffer again; suffer as he had suffered when the girl he had loved and was going to marry proved false to him. He had utterly trusted Olive. Never a whisper of criticism had been breathed against her name. She was sheltered, idolized, secure in her position in the world and in his heart.

It had been different with Beulah Brooke. He had heard her slighted and scomed before he had exchanged a word with her. And yet——

He had loved Olive because of her innocence. Had it come to this—that he would love Beulah in spite of her guilt?

As time went on, he saw less and less of his neighbors, and, if it were a satisfaction to him to know that Mrs. Chisholm had enjoyed his companionship and only relinquished it under coercion, it was an agony to realize that this only served to prove the ex-

tent of the control her companion exercised over her.

Still, he did not leave the place. He could not. Beulah Brooke held him, through an influence as strong as it was subtle. He lingered on and on, and dared not know why.

She had asked him once if he was ever disturbed in his room by any sound from their apartment, and, though he had not thought of it before, he suddenly realized that he had never heard the faintest echo of a sound. He told her so and, while she had at once dismissed the subject as if it were of no importance, he could see that she was relieved.

One evening he retired unusually early to his own apartment, feeling particularly at odds with himself and with the world. The lights and the chatter and the violins in the drawingroom distracted him, and he was glad to escape from them to the quiet and darkness of his room, where he could dream and think and smoke at his leisure and determine for the hundredth time certainly to go "tomorrow." The sounds of music and many voices below did not penetrate to this far-away region, and he was congratulating himself on having escaped to such comforting silence and gloom, when he became conscious of an unusual circumstance that brought him to his feet in an instant. He distinctly heard the sound of a smothered cry from the room next his own-Mrs. Chisholm's room. At first he thought he must be mistaken, but after a second he knew he was not. Some one was sobbing, and an ineffectual attempt was being made to stifle the sobs. deep, The shuddering, strangling breaths were so full of tragic anguish that they drew Duane, in spite of himself, to the door that, locked and heavily draped, connected his room with the one beyond, which was only opened—the hall-boy had vouchsafed -when the two apartments were thrown into a double suite.

He hesitated an instant, not knowing what to do; but the next moment the sound of Mrs. Chisholm's voice decided him. It was clearly audible and unmistakably hers, although the tones were strangely hoarse and muffled and interrupted by quick, painful gasps.

"You do not dare to do it! You

shall not!"

The words were uttered as if in Duane's ear.

"It is a crime you are committing a crime punishable by law. You have stolen it—taken it from me by force! How have you the heart to torture me so?—me, a poor, helpless old woman! For God's sake, do not destroy it!—for your own sake! I might die to-night and that would leave you in— How can I ever trust you again? And I loved you, loved you! And you care only for yourself and for-My peace of mind is nothing to you! I have a right to dispose of my property as I see fit. No one can prevent me. But if you destroy it—the will -and I should die to-morrow, the other will—you would be left—no one could dispute—oh, if only some one could help me! If only Mr. Duane could hear and come- Ah!"

The last word rang out almost in a shriek, for, at the mention of his name and her need of him, Duane had swept aside the curtain, set his foot against the door and prepared to burst it open by force. But there was no need of violence. At the touch of his hand it flung wide on its hinges, and he found himself across its threshold and close beside the wheeled chair and its trembling occupant. In a flash the vivid scene burnt itself indelibly upon

his memory.

The white, drawn face of the paralytic, with its perfectly inscrutable expression and its two searching, gleaming eyes, into which all the life of the death-stricken body seemed to have concentrated, fixed in a sort of somnambulistic stare on the figure of Beulah Brooke, who crouched, rather than knelt, on the floor beside her. All the girl's dignity had forsaken her. Her face was blanched and set, her eyes heavy and expressionless, and with one hand she crushed a crumpled, knotted handkerchief against her lips,

while with the other she clutched a red-sealed paper to her bosom. At intervals she gave way to terrible, shuddering, voiceless sobs that shook her from head to foot. Neither of the women seemed to do more than half-see Duane, as he stood before them. Mrs. Chisholm kept her gaze fixed unwaveringly on the other's eyes, holding them as in the clutch of a vise, until Beulah Brooke, with a shivering breath and a look of unutterable protest, sank forward, her face on the floor.

Duane rushed to raise her, but fell back at the peremptory command of Mrs. Chisholm.

"Not yet! No yet! Wait a moment more. So! Now lift her up! Be gentle with her! The sofa there! That will do. Thank you. Generally she has to lie as she falls, poor child, until I wake her. Don't look at her so—she doesn't deserve it. good God, man, don't suffer like that! I thought you loved her, but never like this. If I had known you loved her like this— Don't pity me! It's all right now-now that you have come. I'll explain—just sit down next me, so; your back to her. one must overhear. Don't fret about her; she will sleep until I wake her. It will do her good. Nearer, please. I can only whisper.

"You see what I am—a helpless woman, my body half-dead. I was left all alone, widowed, childless. None of my people came to comfort me—not one of my own blood—when Donald died and I became—like this. They made excuses, the politest excuses, but they would not stay with me. And yet they intend to claim my property, when I die, as my 'natural heirs.' Natural! At first I thought they would not have long to wait. I hoped it would be so. longed to die. I was—so lonely. Then she—Beulah—came. She came to tell me about Donald. She had been in the train at the time of the accident. She was with him to the end; so brave, so uncomplaining! She had been injured, too, but she

gave no sign; she just bore her hurt and helped to rescue the others. Don't think she ever told me that. My lawyers heard it from others who were there. I pleaded with her to stay with me. I knew it was selfish -it's death in life for her-but I was so comfortless and—and—one can accept such sacrifices from Beulah. She waits upon me hand and foot; she never sleeps, I think. Whenever I need her, night or day, she is at my side and—I always need her. lifts me—carries me; I am in her heart as well as in her arms. does it all. I suppose I might have a servant to do the heaviest work, but I'm selfish and fastidious; I hate a servant's touch, and so—Beulah spares Sometimes she overexerts herself, and then I have to make her rest -she would never do it unless she were compelled. I'm physically helpless, as you see. There was only one way for me to control her. It's shameful, I know, but I can't help it. I have to use the only power that's left me—my mind over hers. At first it was fearfully difficult—she rebelled so; but now I can do it quite easily. Only, to-night it was hard, she was so determined! She never knew, until we came here, what people were saying about her-that she exerted undue influence over me—that she was scheming for my property. Poor child! But, at last, she discovered it, and-it almost killed her. I made her confess what it was that was troubling her; she did not wish to tell. But she promised not to leave me, for all the slander. Then you came, and she—she grew to love you. God forgive me for telling you what she tried so hard to conceal, even from me. And, when she could not endure the pain of meeting you, because she felt you must despise her so for what the gossips said, I had in pity to consent to let her spare herself what suffering she could by avoiding you. She discovered here that I had made a will leaving it all—the property—to her, and she pleaded and pleaded with me to alter it. She said it would be a

curse to her-no one would ever believe in her again. She said it would be theft—that it belonged by right to Ha! my people, who my people. have been so good to me! She begged me to listen to her, but I-I know what her life was when she was penniless. Oh, she suffered—she suffered! Poverty like that means hardship and misery and insult and wretchedness! I could not bear it—to think of Beulah, my girl, suffering so again after what she has been to me! I knew she meant to destroy the will if she could, poor lamb! She is as innocent as a child and as transparent as crystal. I saw what was in her mind. and I was afraid she might succeed. So I arranged to give her to-night what would seem to be her chance. She never dreamed it was a plot. bribed a maid to unlock that door detestable, I know; but I did it. was desperate. I made her turn the key and then the knob, and she set the door ajar just as I bade her. I did it so you could hear. And then, when I knew you had come up, I had Beulah bring me my papers, and I pretended not to notice that the will was there. and let her snatch it, and then she would have destroyed it, but I held her back with my eyes and I talked talked-oh, hideously loud, so that you could hear. She would never have let you know the truth—not if she had died. I know her-so sensitive, so proud! I have been selfish, I know, to let her wear her young life out serving me; but I'm not all bad; I determined you should know the truth and—her—they're both the same —and now you do. Swear to me you love her, Robert Duane! Swear to me you'll try to be worthy of her! Great heavens, man, don't cry like that! It—it breaks a woman's heart to see a man cry. There, let me kiss you, boy! I have no son, and you, no mother. Now, wait a moment—I'll wake her—softly, oh, softly! Beulah! Beulah! Love, look up! That's right, my dear! There, Robert, take her on the balcony. The night air is so sweet—and you will be alone!"

FORTUNE SMILES

HE loves me; he loves me not!"
Ah, curious little maid,
She knows full well my love, and yet
The truth she hath essayed
To tear from out this tiny flower,
And as the petals fall
She chants the tune, "He loves me much;
He loves me not at all."

"He loves me; he loves me not!"
The petals fast grow few.
Alas! the thing is going wrong;
What will the maiden do?
She slyly steals a glance my way,
Two leaves as one take flight;
She murmurs, "Ah, he loves me much;
I'm glad it came out right!"
TRUMAN ROBERTS ANDREWS.



MAKING HIMSELF CLEAR

SHE—Do you know that lady in the far corner?

HE—In a way; I have a listening acquaintance with her.

"I don't believe I understand you, sir."

"She is my wife."



A HARD FIGHT

SHE—Did your friend marry the widow? HE—No; but his untiring perseverance is all that saved him.



EXTREMELY DISTANT

RANDOLPH—He is a distant relative of mine.
SHE—How distant?
"Oh, about \$150,000 removed."

IN THE BACHELOR'S GARDEN

By Temple Bailey

HE cottage is taken," said Jane.

The Bachelor laid down his spoon and pushed back his strawberries. "Any women?"

"A girl," said Jane, tersely.

The Bachelor groaned and picked

up his paper.

Then there was silence, while Jane poured the coffee and rang for muffins and sweetbreads.

"You needn't know her," said Jane,

after a while.

The Bachelor peered abstractedly through his glasses. "Her? Oh, the

girl!" he remarked, finally.

Jane nodded, and, having finished breakfast, he gathered up his letters, and went and stood by the open window from which the latticed blinds were thrown back. The rusty-breasted robins were hopping about the dewy lawn, and the crab-apple trees were a splash of pink in the orchard beyond. The smell of the sweet Spring air awoke something within him.

"Is she pretty, Jane?" he said, hesi-

tatingly.

Jane was carrying the tray out of the door, but she turned and looked at him searchingly, down the length of the dim room.

"She's young," she said, "and yellow-haired, and she has a little brother and she keeps a cat." After this information, the old housekeeper went out and slammed the door.

"H'm," mused the Bachelor, thoughtfully, when he was left alone.

Then he stepped through the window and into his garden. The long, narrow beds that bordered the paths were gay with tulips and jonquils; an almond-bush drooped its slender pink branches over the tender green of the grass; from the leafless branches of the wistaria-vine on the garden wall hung delicate purplish clusters of blossoms, which mingled their fragrance with that of the lilacs by the gate. There was a cat-bird in the hedge and a flock of small brown sparrows twittered among the snowywhite blossoms of the cherry-trees, and the wrens were building in the eaves of the Summer-house.

The Bachelor knelt by the side of a rose-bush, picked up the trowel he had dropped when called in to breakfast, and began to turn up the rich earth around the roots of the bush.

Suddenly, the peace of the garden was broken. The happy chatter of the birds ceased and they uttered restless, frightened cries. The Bachelor stopped humming a tuneless and idiotic little song and rose from his knees, dropping his eye-glasses that he might get a better view at long range

Under the cherry-tree was the cause of the uproar. A magnificent white cat crouched on the ground and widened her green eyes evilly, and whipped her tail back and forth as the birds circled above and around her,

just out of reach.

The Bachelor took a step forward, and she bounded away; but he was too quick for her, and caught her up in his arms and looked into her green

"No cats allowed, pussy cat," he said, emphatically. Then, holding her under one arm, while she struggled violently, he placed a ladder against

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the garden wall, amid the wistaria, and climbed to the top round. In spite of her clawing and scratching, he held her for a moment in his strong arms and stroked her fur. "No cats and no girls, pussy cat," he said, and sighed.

In the sigh was the renunciation of a man dominated by the memory of a youthful experience. The Bachelor had loved once, but the girl had married another man. When he met her he wondered that such an insignificant being could have spoiled his faith in women, but in all these years there had been no girl in the garden.

As for cats, Jane objected to cats; and his old housekeeper's prejudice, together with a certain consideration for the birds, had made the rule secure.

He rubbed the cat under her chin, thoughtfully, seriously, and, with a sudden change of tactics, she curled up against his arm and gave a long, purring mew, and tucked her soft white head close against his neck. The action had in it all the seductiveness of sudden, caressing surrender. The Bachelor liked it and wished more of it, but he had long ago learned to close his heart to feminine blandishments; so he took her up carefully by the back of the neck and dropped her over the garden wall. She landed safely on the soft grass, and he looked over after her.

"You are very nice, pussy cat," he said; "but you are not for my garden."

The cat bounded across the road, and as she did so the door of the cottage opposite opened. There came out of the door a girl—a goddess, the Bachelor called her—in a muslin gown. She was straight and slender, and she was very, very young. All at once, looking at her from the top of the little ladder, the Bachelor felt a pang for his lost youth.

"Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you been?" she questioned, severely, and flashed an inquiring glance at the Bachelor, whose trim, dark head and intellectual eye-glasses were all that showed above the wall.

But the Bachelor was looking down

confusedly on the fine white parting that separated the burnished golden waves of her hair.

"She frightened the birds," he said,

helplessly, and disappeared.

For the next half-hour he dug distractedly in the earth and spoiled most of his precious rose-bushes, for his head was filled with visions of the goddess with the burnished hair.

Suddenly, he straightened up and laughed, and with the laugh he was transformed. He strode up the path with the swagger of a happy boy. His quiet, scholarly walk was discarded. What man could be old with a face like that in his heart?

It was fate. That morning something had said to him, "She is coming!" and now she had come into his life—his lonely, lonely life.

Up in the Bachelor's den was a little window that overlooked the cottage. This window became a shrine. He could see the girl and the boy and the white cat, and they were all of them very gay and very happy and very young, and the Bachelor, keeping wistful watch of them, felt like an elderly Peri.

He knew that he was spying on the goddess, but he, who had always been the soul of honor, gloried in his fall. When the goddess came to the door it was an event; when she poured coffee in the dining-room of the cottage it was an epoch; when she walked in the garden it was history.

He drove Jane nearly distracted by the mystery of his actions. When before had he neglected the precious

garden?

"Your lilies-of-the-valley are coming out," she said one morning, re-

proachfully.

In the quiet days before the coming of the goddess, the lily bed had been the pride of the Bachelor's heart. His conscience smote him and he went out to the secluded corner where the little white bells nestled in the sheathlike leaves.

"She is like them, she is like them," he whispered, and brooded over their beauty. Up to this time he had been content to worship afar off, but now he resolved to meet her and know her, and when the Bachelor wished anything he went systematically to work to get it.

Knowing that the boy went fishing in the early morning, the Bachelor also went fishing in the early morning.

They met at a turn of the stream. The boy was on one bank and the Bachelor on the other.

"Any luck?" said the Bachelor, in a hushed voice that seemed to fit in with the shadows and the silence of the woods.

The boy looked at the Bachelor's well-filled creel and then at his own empty one.

"I never have any luck," he said.

"H'm," said the Bachelor, and he dropped his eye-glasses and gave the boy a long look from his clear brown eyes. Such a depressing youngster, and the goddess had to live with him! Then the Bachelor sat down on a stone.

"A fisherman, my dear fellow," he said, "must have patience. I can wait forever for anything I want and mean to have." And he thought of the girl.

But the boy thought only of himself. "I won't be patient," he flared.

"H'm," said the Bachelor again, and he turned his glasses absently around in his fingers, so that they flashed sun-spots over the boy's chestnut head.

They walked along the opposite banks of the stream, sometimes in silence, and sometimes the boy talked. He was a pessimistic youngster. Ill health had broken into his school year, and had brought him and his sister to this quiet place.

While the boy talked the Bachelor pondered on plans for a continuance of the acquaintance he had begun. "Do you ride?" he asked, as they tramped homeward.

The boy's face brightened. "Yes," he said; "but we haven't any horses."

"Come over in the morning and have a run with me," the Bachelor said, and the boy accepted. Before they reached home the fish all went into the boy's creel, and he was joyously hospitable.

"Come in, and we'll have them for

breakfast."

The Bachelor concealed his indecorous exultation and went.

Then the boy, without ceremony, led him through the back gate of the cottage and they passed the kitchen window, and there was the goddess making biscuit for breakfast!

She was rolling the dough and her arms were bared to the elbow, showing childish dimples. She had on a pink gown and a white apron, and the Bachelor was enthralled to the point of speechlessness. The white cat sat on the sill and blinked at the Bachelor.

"Do you like them?" said the god-

dess, meaning the biscuit.

"I love them," said the Bachelor, meaning the dimples.

When she came into the dining-room later, she was without the apron and her sleeves were down. An old colored woman passed the trout and the biscuits, and the girl poured coffee; but the Bachelor feasted on ambrosia and drank nectar.

Life from this time became strange and unreal to the Bachelor. Gone were the days when his books and his flowers were his companions. In the daytime he cultivated the society of the boy, and in the evening he was permitted to walk and talk with the goddess.

Sometimes he met a pink-cheeked, athletic young man, and at others a dark and slender foreigner. On such evenings he would go home and sit in some dark corner of his garden and meditate murder.

But there were other days when no one came, and she was very kind. Little by little he was permitted to see the woman behind the goddess, and he loved her the more because of her humanity.

So it came about that one evening the Bachelor came down-stairs with a rose in his buttonhole and a bunch of lilies-of-the-valley in his hand.

Jane eyed him disapprovingly.

"You are old," she grumbled, with the freedom of long service, "to be so gay."

The Bachelor kissed her on her withered cheek. "I am not old!" he cried.

"You are forty-five your next birth-

day," said Jane, unappeased.

For a moment the light went out of the bachelor's face; then he looked at the lilies and laughed and ran down the steps like a boy.

"Oh, Jane, Jane, you are mistaken," he repeated, gaily; "I am just twenty."

Later, when it was dark, he came home, with the faded lilies still in his hand. He had fingered his glasses nervously when he asked the question of questions, and when she said "No," in her cool, confident little way, his hands had gone out desperately toward the lilies, which lay between them, and he had clutched them as if for help.

"I know," he had said, "I—I am too old." And she had been mute.

He crept up to his den and dropped the lilies on the desk and his arms across the lilies and his head on his arms, and the shadows gathered deeper and deeper, until the room was black.

After this he turned again to his garden. "We must live without her," he said, and he talked with Jane about bulbs and other dry and common-place things.

But sometimes, in the evening, when his pulses stirred, he would go up-stairs in the gloom to the little window and watch her, as she played rippling tunes to the boy or threw tissue-paper balls for the white cat to catch.

Then he would finger the gray hair on his temples and his voice would break. "Such a fool to think of it!" he would whisper; "such an old, old fool!" With a gesture of despair he would draw the curtains to shut out the merry, laughing group and light his lamp and gaze unseeing at the yellow pages of his old, old books.

Therefore it came about that he did not see the girl, after the boy had gone to bed, as she stood by the little gate and looked wistfully over toward the big, dark house. Only the white cat knew, and she preserved a sphinx-like silence when she was hugged close in round, white arms, while tears, falling fast, made spots on her immaculate fur.

"He doesn't seem so very, very old, pussy cat," her mistress would moan. "I wonder—" And then her sentences would trail off into indistinguishable murmurs, while the cat purred peacefully as she licked her wet fur smooth again.

As the Bachelor went no more to the cottage, the boy came to him. The white cat, too, came, timidly at first, and finally with the boldness of assured welcome. But the girl never came.

The boy sat on a bench and delivered dogmatic opinions, as is the way with the young, while the Bachelor worked and listened.

One morning, however, the boy was restless; evidently something was on his mind.

"Why don't you come over?" he asked, suddenly.

The Bachelor looked down at him from the top of the ladder, where he was training the wistaria.

"Oh, because—" He paused.

"That's what Felicia said," remarked the boy, and stuck his hands in his pockets and lifted a red face to the Bachelor.

There was dead silence as the Bachelor raised a heavy branch and laid it in place.

"She said something else," went on

the boy, awkwardly.

The Bachelor dropped the branch and came down the ladder and stood in front of the boy.

"What did she say?" he demanded.

The boy dug his heels into the gravel. "Well, I asked her to come in here with me, and she said, 'No, no; I am shut out; I have shut myself out forever!' and——"

The Bachelor put both of his hands on the boy's shoulders and gave him a little shake. "Did she say that—did she?"

His voice was deep with emotion, and he threw his head back and squared his shoulders. The youngster looked at him with sudden embarrassed understanding.

"Oh, I say," he advised, with confused blushes, "try again. She doesn't know her own mind; no girl does."

The Bachelor wrung the boy's hand, and then that red-faced and bullet-

headed angel departed.

But, when the boy had gone, the Bachelor's face darkened. His doubts returned, and he sat in his lonely corner with only the lilies for company. The white cat crept through the half-opened gate, unrebuffed, and, as the birds were all asleep, she came and sat by the Bachelor's side and tucked her pretty head under his hand.

And this time he did not turn her away. "Oh, pussy cat, pussy cat," he said, "will she ever come into my

garden?"

They sat there for a long time, the man and the cat, and the moon came up and showed the garden glorified with the whiteness of the light. There were silver flowers in it, with a gold one now and then, and the branches of the almond-bush made dark shadows on the lawn.

Then, outside of the gate, he heard a voice calling.

"Pussy! pussy cat!" cried the voice. The Bachelor rose and went to the gate and pushed it open wide. The girl stood without, and he took her hand and drew her beyond the honey-suckle-wreathed portals.

"She is here," he said, "but you

must come in and get her."

Thus the girl came into the garden, and now that the Bachelor had her on enchanted ground he was not afraid.

So, suddenly brave, he went and picked a big red rose, and, leaning over her, he fastened it in her hair—the burnished hair of the goddess. Then his two hands went to each side of the oval of her face and he turned it up to his.

"You belong to my garden, you flower of all the flowers," he said; "I

will not let you go."

As she looked at him, wonderingly, all his courage deserted him; for who dares co.nmand a goddess? And he went and leaned against the cherrytree with his face in his hands.

But the garden pleaded for him. All the blossoms that he had loved and cared for contributed their share to the enchantment. As in a dream, her hands touched his and drew them away from his face; and, as he looked into her eyes, all at once he knew that he was really very, very young, and that his garden was the garden of paradise.



LIFE AND I

AS the shadows glide
Over the wheat on the ripe hillside,
So we journey, Life and I;
O sweet youth-time, go not by!

Where the warm winds meet, To the wreathed pipe we time our feet; So we journey, Life and I; O sweet youth-time, go not by!

Where the grasses play, Singing, we wander away and away; Lovers ever, Life and I; O sweet youth-time, go not by!

JOHN VANCE CHENEY.

THE SEARCH

OH, the weary way I went
Up and down the city,
Seeking for my Heart's Content,
(Eh, my sweet, my pretty!)
Townfolk from their casements bent,
Smiled in mirth or pity,
Nowhere was my Heart's Content
Up or down the city.

Oh, the weary way I went
Through the country places,
Peering for my Heart's Content
Through the greenwood's laces;
Swain and maiden laughed and leant,
Mocking in their faces;
Nowhere was my Heart's Content
Through the country places.

Through the Land o' Dreams I went.
Lo! one called me sweetly.
Through the dusk my Heart's Content
Star-like rose to meet me.
Here in No-man's Continent
Folk nor flout nor cheat me,
Here alone my Heart's Content
Thrills and stills to greet me.

McCrea Pickering.



A SURE ENOUGH SECRET

SHE—There is one secret a woman can keep.

HE—Absurd! What is it?

"I can't tell you; it's a secret."



GOING HER ONE BETTER

CORA—The idea! Jack couldn't get me if he wanted me. Lena—He couldn't get me even if he didn't want me.

THE MEASURE OF LIFE

By Carlton T. Chapman

OOD MORNING, Edith."
"Why, Lucy, how do you
do! How glad I am to
see you! Where have you been?"

"Why, where do you suppose?—the most interesting trip!—to one of the camps at Chickamauga. Papa was there, you know, when they had a battle once, in our war. He was a captain then, and wanted to see how the place would look with all these new soldiers there—the North and South together, he said, camping on the same field. It pleased him so much I couldn't help enjoying it, though it was awfully hot and dusty. I thought I never could get clean again. They were very nice to us. Papa seemed to know all the generals and big men like that, and they shook hands, laughed and almost cried sometimes over their stories, and one old man—just a dear!—with a little, cleanwhite beard, and stars on his collar, but not much else to show he was an officer, just hugged papa and said he'd saved his life once when they were fighting, against each other, too. Well, I assure you, it was quite funny to see those old fellows talking and laughing and crying together; and, when the bugles blew and soldiers came marching by, they all stood up and saluted, and papa wished he was marching again, too. Sometimes he thought he was, I guess. He would step up and down till I'd have to speak to him, and then-poor old papa!-there'd be tears in his eyes; and once, when the band played 'Marching through Georgia', he commenced singing it, and they all joined in, hundreds of them, until it did sound grand.

Every one seemed to know it, and shouted it out-hurrahed and hurrahed, till I got quite excited myself, and had my hat tipped far over my eyes, when I remembered again; and along came that handsome Jack Carter and Tom Drake. They must have thought I was losing my senses, standing around there with those old men, all hot and excited. looked quite fine with their new uniforms and lots more important than the one they said was a general. Papa would hardly speak to them, he was so interested in the old men and the singing. He was crying when they got through, and said: 'Thank God, Jack, we have lived to see the time we can sing that battle hymn together, you and I, and our sons of the North and South, marching side by side under the same old flag. never thought I should live to see the day.' 'Nor I,' said the old general, crying, too, and they both shook hands till I thought they never would get through, and I must say I felt quite excited myself, and didn't seem to mind if my hat wasn't on straight, though when I got back to the house I was a fright.

"Oh, of course, I asked for Bob the first thing. You know that I always liked poor old Bob, with his enthusiasm and his hobbies. His regiment had gone to Tampa."

"Oh, it had! How did you know?"

said Edith.

"Why, it was in all the papers, and all about leaving his swell company here that wouldn't go to war."

"Well, I don't read the papers much, and never war-talk. It doesn't

interest me: I don't care anything about it. These tin soldiers of ours, they don't compare with the regiments I've seen in Europe; they do look like soldiers. At Fontainebleau! What a good time we had there, with the little lieutenant of Chasseurs; he was quite a nice boy!"

"Was that where you met the count?"

"Yes, he was a captain then. They were going to have a fight, those two, but I stopped it and went away soon after, and then the count came over here, and Bob got mad about it."

"I should think he would."

"Now, Lucy, it's just for amusement—you know that. The count's charming. He has such funny little ways! and he's useful, too. He sings and recites so prettily! Why, all the women have tried to get him away from me—all but you, Lucy. I must say you don't seem to like him, and I wonder, too. Don't you think he's handsome?"

"Perhaps, for that style of a man;

but I don't like the style."

"Well, he's very nice, petit Maurice. I am really getting very fond of him. I should quite miss him."

"I suppose you miss Bob?"

"Yes, of course, I do. Bob's so big, and always made so much noise, and was always smoking all over the house. It's a kind of relief to have him gone."

"Doesn't the count smoke?"

"Cigarettes; that's all. I, too, smoke them sometimes. They have his name on them and his crest.

"What is his crest?"

"Oh, I don't know! It's quite simple, but he says it's one of the oldest in France. Maurice never makes any noise, and he always laughs, and is so obliging and considerate!"

"Yes, I suppose so," said Lucy, "They always are, for a wearily. time."

"Bob couldn't abide the count. But he need not have shown it so much; and as for going to the war, that's his own fault. I didn't wish him to. I had planned to go to France this Summer. We had so many pleasant invitations, through the count's friends."

"But they say Americans are not

popular over there this year."

"Oh, nonsense! The spread-eagle sort never are. It's quite different with me."

"Why so, Edith? I suppose you talk and act like a Frenchwoman!

"Well, I try to. I have been in France so much, I fancy I can play the

"Yes, with the count to help you, I fancy you can. Well, I must leave, Edith. I have to go to a meeting this afternoon at Aunt Lu's. They're organizing a relief-association for the soldiers. They say there will be lots of them sick before the Summer's over. What do you hear from Bob?"

"Oh, he says he's getting used to it down there, with the thermometer at ninety-six degrees. The flies, mosquitos and the dust, he says, are exasperating. Says he's in the saddle at half-past five every morning, and they work and drill nearly all day. Sounds very stupid to me. But he was always funny. I can't understand how a man in his position, who has always had everything in the way of comfort and luxury, can stand that sort of life, all for a silly notion about his duty. One reason why he doesn't like Europe is because he can't have his bath or his linen as nice as he likes them, and now he's turned himself into a regular muledriver, and I suppose is hot and horrid."

"Poor Bob!"

"Why, Lucy, you worry about him more than I do."

"Well, I wonder you don't worry more. If I had a husband as nice as he is, I should worry about him a lot. I should go there to see him and cheer him up.'

"Go down there at this season? Mercy! I never could stand it. It's hot enough here; there's no place to

live there, either."

"Well, that would not make any difference to me; but, as it happens, there is a big hotel."

"Oh, so there is; the Clarks told me about it. They were down there during the Winter. Well, I know I couldn't stand it. We are going to Newport soon. It will be dull, too, this season. This horrid war has spoiled everything."

"Yes, it has changed things a great deal. We shall stay in town quite late, I fear; papa is so interested!"

"What! if the Spanish fleet should

come?"

"You needn't worry about that. I've a cousin on the *Columbia* who says he only wishes they would. Besides, they'd more than likely visit Newport, also."

"Oh, that would be truly exciting. I almost wish they would. They have such pretty names, so long and important—quite different from plain

American ones."

"Well, there may be just as good or better men, if only called John Smith. That count has turned your head, Edith, I do believe. But I must go. Give my love to Bob when you write."

"Why don't you write him yourself, Lucy? He'd be glad to hear from you, for I don't write him very long letters. I always hate to write letters, at least in English. French is so much prettier; but Bob can't read it, or won't."

"Good-bye, dear; so sweet of you to make me such a nice visit in the

morning!"

"I suppose you'll be at Mrs. Jones's for luncheon to-morrow."

"No."

"Oh, you'd better; there will be a merry party."

"Well, au revoir."

II

The heat in the long grass of the valley was simply stifling. Waves of vapor had risen with the morning sun, and now the shafts of light burned through the still air, touching the parched men like hot needles. Flies and vermin stung them as they lay there on the moist, tropic earth, brushing at the pests, turning about to be

more comfortable, cursing the heat, the delay, or grumbling in good-tempered impatience at the folly that had brought them thus far, to lie in the grass and be shot at by invisible foes.

Along the mud-path called a road, through pools of water and the ruts of heavy-wheeled artillery or transport wagons, cluttered with mule teams, boxes and bales of camp-equipage scattered along the route, jammed with men, horses, mules, wagons—somehow they had marched, and were, at last, in sight of the hill where the fort was.

On the right, since early morning, the artillery had been booming—Capron's battery. Toward El Caney heavy firing had been going on, also for hours, it seemed. A thin gray pall of smoke rose over the valley; and above the white line of the town, just showing in places through the green foliage, a yellowish vapor hung.

The rattle of musketry had been incessant, rising at times to a swirling, feverish roar of sound, sinking again to a dull but continuous rattle. The sharp snap and bark of the artillery sounded, now and again, above it. How maddening to lie here and listen, with no part in it! Toward the shore, over the abrupt coast hills, came the deep-toned thunder of rifled guns from the ships. They, also, were at the quarry.

Oh, for a chance to move on! Company after company continued to cross the little river, wading through the water, some stopping to drink. "Get on, there!" yelled the officers; "don't drink that water!"

It was filling with dead horses and men, too. The enemy had got the range of the ford, and there the bullets flew fast. A dozen men fell. Horses neighed in terror, balking from the deadly opening. Lashed by the driver's whip, they snorted and dashed across. Under the shadow of the trees they felt safe; but the bullets found them there—the far-seeking, singing Mauser, clipping the leaves and branches from the foliage, snipping the grass, peep-peeping through the air.

"What in hell are we left here for?" groaned an officer, as he caught a burly man, who had leaped up and then had fallen into the officer's arms, Tenderly he laid the soldier on dead. the ground, and the blood sorked into it.

"Too late," he said to an ambu-

lance man; "he's a goner."

Lying in the grass, a trooper of cavalry smoked his pipe, resting on his back.

"Haven't got another pinch, have

ye, pard?" said a comrade.
"Nope; got a cigarette though.

Here, catch it; don't get up."

"Damn it!" the trooper exclaimed, as, taking his pipe from his mouth, a bullet caught it from his hand. "Gee!" he added, "close call for my trigger finger. Wonder if I could get a shot at some of them beggars." And, suiting the action to the word, he began crawling through the tangled, tough-fibred grass. A dozen other men followed

"Keep quiet, there," called an offi-

"Let 'em be," said another; "just

as safe there as here."

"Wonder how long this is going to Don't believe anybody's shooting at those Spaniards; they seem to be very brash.

Some of the troopers were firing now. The flash of their short guns They seemed to comfort them. crawled further on, up the hill. others followed. The whole line began to wriggle through the dirt and bram-

"Here, what are you kicking me for?"

said a trooper, facing about.

"I'm not touching you," said the But a moment later he next man. cried: "Why, you're shot! your back's all blood!"

"The hell I am! Feels as if I had

been struck in the back."

Several officers were walking about now, keeping track of their men; others stood up. The men began to rise to their feet along the line.

There must have been an order given to advance. What a din the guns made! They were cracking all about.

The men began to cheer and shout. "Hurrah, now for them!"

They began to run, stumbling and falling, some of them, but getting up again and advancing in squads and groups. Soon the hill was black with them; but they fell fast. The air was alive with the whining messages of death. "Forward, charge!" the bugle sounded at last; then the advance was rapid. There was no more doubt. The fire from the hilltop flashed continuously. It was hot, desperate work.

"Hurrah!" they yelled, and pushed A strapping darkey of the Tenth was singing, "For I want you, ma honey, yaas, I do." Between his lips was a half-burned cigarette. Suddenly he pitched forward on his face and then

rolled over.

"Reckon you have no further use for that cigarette, honey," said another Tenth man, appropriating the same, "an' I'll tell 'em about you,'fore Gawd."

-"Forward!" was the order that now

ran along the line.

"Look out for the barbed wire!"

Barbed wire! line after line of it! A dozen men were caught struggling in it. But the advance did not stop. Over it, through it, cutting and tearing with hands, knives or wire-cutters, they got past. Men were down and up again, or down forever. Firing and shouting, they swept up the hill, irresistible, indomitable.

Leading his men, crouching through the grass with them, jumping up and running ahead, calling them on, up the hill went Captain Bob Yorke, burned in the southern sun, a young beard growing on his hot face, dirty with the service, like his men, loved by them cheering, urging, his eyes flashing with excitement, erect now and sword in hand, facing death with no thought but proud elation.

It was worth a hundred years of dull city life, he thought, thus to be a man with other men; to face death; perchance, to purge himself in this sacrifice of all the selfishness of his past life. Yes, he was glad of the chance. The world, the great city, the thousand interests of life faded away in

the dim past. Here and now he lived, proving his manhood; here and now he would die. He did not sorrow for the wife behind him. He thought of her as she had been, with a wave of tender love—and then, alas! as she had become, indifferent, selfish, wrapped up in the silly world he despised with all his big, manly heart. She might even be relieved, might be glad; would mourn him properly, and then marry the count — that simpering humbug, that imbecile! At the thought he burst into such a howl of rage and agony that the men about him quickened their steps involuntarily, and wondered what had struck the captain—perhaps a bullet.

Fast in the pathway, tugging and struggling with his bare hands in impatient rage at sight of his comrades passing him, was a negro soldier in a web of barbed wire. The more he struggled, the more entangled he became. The bullets flew about him; his hat went off; blood trickled down his face.

"'Fore de Lord, won't none o' you folks help dis nigger?" he groaned.

"Sit down, you fool, and keep quiet. We ain't no time for you now."

The first line of attack was all that they thought of then. On! on! Help comrades afterward.

"Oh, Lord!" cried the negro, his eyes sticking out with wrath, fear and disappointment, as he saw his comrades sweep by him.

"Here, what's the matter with you?" called Captain Bob. "That's no way; keep cool, now, and I'll cut you out."

"Thank de Lord! Bless you, captain!" and the soldier put his hands to his head, wiping away the blood, which, warm and sticky, wet his fingers. He looked at the red stain with dull wonder.

"Thank you, captain. Didn't like to get stuck here and let all the other boys get ahead of me."

"Go on, boys!" yelled the captain to his men.

"Come out of that, you fools! Bob, come on, you're only a target there."

"Here, now! Jump, put your feet on the wires! Now come on!"

A hundred Mausers were pointed at the little group struggling there full three minutes. It seemed an hour.

"My God, sir, you're hit!" exclaimed the trooper, as the captain gave a gasp and fell into the mass of

rusty, torturing wire.

Picking him up and putting him on his broad back, the negro grasped his arms and, holding him, ran slantwise across the field to a clump of trees. The men gave way for them; they were running now, hardly stopping to shoot: some were almost at the top of the There was a fury of whining sounds in the air, the roar and rattle of the guns were continuous. deep hum of voices sounded above it all—the fierce battle-cry of the North The voice that rose above the men. guns in Chickamauga's woods, the wild battle-song of Gettysburg, the same strong voice called it out now. It rose with resistless volume above the sound of the guns; it echoed through the woods and back from the hills, like the ghost of some great spirit mounting in wild cadence above the storm of battle. On it swept, lifting the hearts men in that fierce advance, bringing terror and dismay to the men in the trenches. Had they ever heard that wild cry before? They paused to listen, and then the brown, panting line swept over them. They looked in the eyes, they felt the hot breath of the devils who had charged a mile up the hill, without cover and unsupported, and stopped not for the rain of death from the rapid-firing guns. Was ever such a thing before? Could it be possible?

Again the terrible battle-yell rose above the din, and the brown line stayed not in the trenches, rose over and into them, and the enemy fled in wild flight—back to their batteries.

III

THE eyes of night looked down on the scene. Soft starlight fell from the velvety blackness of the sky.

Above them the encircling mountains

rose gloomy and dark, hiding their mystery in pathless wood or impassa-

ble crag.

In the trenches rested the army, wet, cold and tired, but triumphant. What heed if the trampled ground was but mud and water? They had won it. What heed of the tangled grass, the dripping trees, awesome and spectral in the somber shadows? What heed of the dead and the wounded; of the city beyond and the dreaded guns of the ships in the harbor? For the morrow, what heed? Let it come! They had taken the hill, they would hold it, too; but let the leaders remember that men must sleep.

Sleep was not for many that Back on the road to weary night. Siboney, through the mud and the darkness, wading, stumbling, staggering on, through the clinging bushes and deep blackness of the trees, moved a grim procession of men, wounded and strong, the quick and the dead. Back to the hospital tents, not yet ready for them; back to where the ships might help on the morrow, for on the morrow who knew what might follow? There was no place at the front for the injured and the helpless.

All night long thin lines of men straggled along the way to the front, sleepy and weary, carrying their guns as they pleased. They turned out for the rumbling wagons, jolting back. Wounded? Of course, many of them!

At the front the surgeons had done their best, tying up wounds, patching and pulling men together; placing on them yards of white bandage in lieu of shirts, a brass tag with name, company and regiment in case one should fall by the way; for all were alike that night, all equally dirty, blackened and muddy—officers and privates; there was no difference then.

"Back you go; you that have legs must walk. Move on; we don't want you here. Hurry, before the sun's up;

the heat may kill you."

Such were the orders. Men with broken heads or arms, or shot through the chest, must walk if they could, and most of them did. In the jolting wagons were many who could not, and so they were carried; racked and bumped, to be sure, but carried back to Siboney.

Lanterns waved dull yellow flickers of light along the path; men asked for friends, and leaned against one another for support, toiled slowly on, and pitied the poor fellows who were unable to walk. Drivers cursed the stubborn mule teams, grumbled, complained, but managed to get on with their freight, though sometimes they blocked the way as the wheels were caught in branches or ruts of the road. But, at sun-up, even before that hour, the procession moved down the steep, winding way into the village by the sea, where the tents were already going up—broad, white shelters against the sun and the shower.

There were the transports, many newly arrived, burdened with troops. There was a hospital ship, and there was one flying a flag with the Red Cross.

"Poor fellow!" said the doctor; "I am afraid he can't live."

"Oh, doctor, do your best for him.

Do you know who he is?"

"Oh, that doesn't matter a bit. It is all the same just now, you know. If you can get him down to the hospital or on to the ship, there may be a chance, but I doubt it; three wounds, and one of them bad."

Some of Bob's friends had found him, and were doing their best to help him.

Four of his men, uninjured and willing, were told off to carry him in. Gladly they took the burden, though they were weary for sleep and their feet seemed weighted with iron. Trooper Sam'l, his head tightly bound in a bandage, marched along with the four men, refusing to leave them, though he would have got on faster alone.

"We lost some of our best men, too," he said, "and my captain he got killed; mighty sorry for that, I is. Captain was kind o' cross sometimes, an' he spoke mighty sharp to this nigger this very day, but I'se mighty sorry; the captain was mighty fine man, and we was very proud of him for a captain. This gentleman ain't no regular, I reckon, or mabbe he wouldn't 'a' stopped to help me; but he's mighty brave man all the same, and I hope de good Lord will spare him. Doctor kind o' shook his head, I thought. Any time you fellows want a lift, reckon I can take hold."

"Oh, go on! Think we're going to let you help carry him?—guess not. Captain is a fine man, though; you're right on that. Been mighty good to us fellows. Guess there ain't no better

made than he is.'

Lucy had landed from the ship that morning and, though shocked and horrified at the sights and scenes into which she had been so suddenly plunged, she conquered her feelings and took heroic hold of the work which so suddenly confronted the medical staff and nurses.

"It is fortunate that you ladies came," said the doctor. "I don't know what we should do without help. We all knew there might be a battle any day, but this rush of business was quite unexpected—and still they come," he ended, as he looked out of the big tent at the hillside, down which wound a train of wagons and a straggling line of men, unarmed and many leaning on one another as they slowly tottered on. How hot the sun was, scorching in the still air of the morning!

The ships at anchor, or moving about, off the little cove, dipping their bows to the cool, blue waves, seemed havens of refuge compared to this dreadful flat stretch, shut in by the hills, where no breeze could reach it, exposed to the sun and the daily downpour of drenching rain—either fiercely hot, or rain-swept and wet with little rivers of muddy water running down the hillside. What miserable, infested little wooden shanties to use for shelter! Yet there were by no means tents enough.

The confusion and noise blinded

poor Lucy. Half-clad men were being handed out of the wagons and dumped on the ground in the shadow of the tents or bushes, there to await their turns in the operating tent. Ambulance men were lugging them about. Here was a man hopping along on one foot, two soldiers supporting him, poor devil! There was one lying on the ground, apparently dead, covered with mud where he had fallen; his dirty face food for the flies that swarmed about him. Another soldier came by and stopped to fan him with his hat, then dragged the unconscious man into the shade.

Early in the morning, the deep, heavy roar of guns had come from the fleet. Seaward, great domes of smoke had risen over the arch of blue-six miles away, yet the heavy reverberations shook the ground here, and echoed back from the mountains in repeated rumbles of thunder, slowly dying away in the distance.

They were bombarding the batteries again. Cervera must be driven out, or the army must retreat from San Juan

and El Caney.

Swiftly the doctors worked. Bones were set, wounds dressed; the smell of disinfectants permeated the tents. waited patiently, and took their turn on the tables without a word or a groan. The nurses helped the doctors in silence. The scorched through the yellow canvas of the tents. It was fearfully hot.

"But it will rain at about two o'clock," said the doctor; "then it will be too cool." All of life was there that morning in that hive of humanity-death, suffering, patient courage, unselfish giving from the strong to those who were about to die, or to live, as pleased God. great aftermath of battle! Who shall tell of all the courage, the heroism, the nobility of soul, the sacrifice of self, by which man can prove of what pure fibre he is made? The battle had its glory and triumph, the fierce joy of striving. Here was only the patient facing of suffering, the facts of life and death.

Lucy had looked among them all for one face she feared to find. Almost giving way to her nerves, now that the work was less urgent, she had gone through the tents where the hopeful cases were stretched out on cot or blanket.

"Here's a tent full of men for whom we can do nothing more. Many will not last the day out. We must help to look after them, to write letters or take their messages," said the doctor. Here Lucy had stayed till, unable to endure it longer, she had fled forth to the fresher air and a moment's rest.

In her path was a black soldier with a piece of bacon frying in his tin pan, in his hand a cup of coffee, just lifted from the smouldering fire. Another negro sitting by, a clean bandage wrapped tightly about his head, his white eyeballs and shiny teeth making his black face seem blacker, attracted her attention. She stopped; both men got up and saluted her.

"Is your coffee good?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am, very good; just made fresh. Would you like to taste it? Cup ain't very nice. We ain't got no other."

"No, thank you; I'm going to have some soon. Yours smells very good, though. Are you much hurt?"

"No, ma'am; came near scalping me, though; kind o' hurts, too, but 'tain't nothing."

"What regiment did you say?"

"Tenth, ma'am; Tenth, regular."

"Do you happen to know Captain

Yorke? Was he hurt?"

"Why, yes, ma'am. I can tell you all about him. Gentleman saved my life, I reckon; leastwise he got me out of a mighty bad place. Got catched in the wire and he cut me out. Is you a friend of his?"

"Friend of his wife's."

"Well, I reckon it's all the same. Captain's mighty fine man; he's powerfully hurt, but I'se praying hard for him, lady, 'deed I is. That's his tent over there under the tree. We just fixed it up a while ago. Oh, yes, ma'am, doctor's been there."

"No, thank you," said Lucy, "I can find it. I see where you mean." And she hurried away to the tent under the trees.

Two soldiers were lying on the grass outside. "May I go in? Is this where Captain Yorke is?"

"Why, yes, lady," said one of the soldiers, jumping up. "I'll just see."

"Say it's a nurse."

"Shall I tell him your name?"

"No-yes."

"Come in," said a weak voice.
"Why, Lucy! What brings you here?
Well, I am glad; this is more than I
deserve. Oh, I feel kind of faint, I
must say; still, if you are going to be
here, I shall have to brace up. I
wouldn't spoil your professional reputation by dying on your hands."

"Now, you must be quiet, or I shall leave. I'll tell you all the news, little by little. Yes, Edith was quite well when I left her," and Lucy turned her

face away.

"Oh, I'll never tell him, never! How could she? Poor Bob!—and for that man!"

Sunday had passed—a hot, fair day. The fading echoes of the battle had fled down the coast to the eastward. Conflicting rumors went from mouth to mouth. The New York had been off the cove in the morning and had left at full speed at the sound of the first gun. Far down the line of hills hung the smoke, but of the result no one knew till late. Then the news came of the wonderful and complete victory. It swept through the camps of the wounded; it fled up the line to the front; it rose above the towering hills from a thousand cheering throats; over the dancing waves, among the troops on the transports—the grand Te Deum of victory.

Lucy had scarcely left Captain Bob. "He cannot live the night out,"

said the doctors.

"Oh, Lucy, this is like heaven, to have you here. It is Sunday, too; that's why I think of it. Do you remember when you used to make me go to church with you and asked

me if I knew the collect? I always remember one. It was the Summer you sent me away, Lucy; do you remember?"

"Hush! hush! you mustn't talk." "Why, Lucy, you are crying; don't, please. Somehow, since you came, I have been living in the past. Ah, well, our lives are ordered, I suppose. Then I got engaged to Edith; the family were so pleased! was so pretty, too! It was for the twelfth Sunday after Trinity, the one I know. I remember it because you always liked that one. Oh, Lucy, you must take me to church again when I get well, even if Edith won't go. She never liked to, somehow. I wish you would read that to me again. Hark! what are they singing? Oh, I know that; I made the whole regiment sing it many a time. It must be the ships have won. Good! good! Why, that's great, isn't it? I wish I could get up.

"Do lie still, Bob."

"Lucy, you are crying again. feel like crying, too; it's that hymn. Are those boys singing out there? That's right—sing it, Lucy. I always liked your voice. There goes the music, too. There must be thousands of them singing it all the way to That's it—the Santiago. verse.

"I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps; They have builded Him an altar 'mid the evening dews and damps; I can read His righteous sentence by the dim

and flaring lamps-His day is marching on.

"In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea.

With a glory in His bosom that transfigures

you and me.

As He died to make men holy Let us die to make men free, While God is marching on."

"That's right, Lucy, hold my hand. I am shaking; it's the excitement; that song always thrills me. How dark it's getting! Why, there's Tom and Bill. How are you, boys? Thank you, Lucy, I think I'll sleep. I am so tired!"

Edith Yorke, in the sumptuous Paris hotel, leaned wearily back in her chair. The morning papers and letters lay on the table, but she was too indifferent to look at them. The count was at his everlasting Cercle de Jeu. Mon Dieu, how she detested him already! He was making the money fly, too—her money.

'Oue la vie est amère! I am afraid I was a fool; it does not seem the same Paris. I wonder what is the matter, what the difference? I thought I should be happy," and she smiled,

bitterly, "with the count."

"Celeste, hand me the letters and a paper."

"The *Herald*, madame?"

"Yes, the Herald, of course; there is nothing in these French papers I care about. I wonder if there is anything more about that battle," she thought. "It was not a great defeat, as the French papers said quite the opposite. Bob's regiment was mentioned; I hope he wasn't hurt. Here is a list of the killed and wounded. What! 'Killed: Capt. Robert Yorke, Company F, Regiment-

"C'est monsieur le comte, madame." "Oh, tell him I am ill. I don't wish to see him now. Tell him I won't come to luncheon, either," she added. "Oui, madame."

A memorial service was being held for the killed of a regiment that had volunteered for the war. Yorke's old regiment had turned out in force and occupied a large part of the vast city The great windows set forth church. with glowing colors the forms of saints and martyrs, who seemed as if living, thrilling and trembling to the exalting notes of the organ, as the music rose in solemn strains above the silent throng that moved down the dim aisles.

"That's Lucy Brown," whispered a bevy of girls, attracted by the presence of the soldiers. "She looks as if she were going to a funeral; she's worn black ever since the war; she went down as a nurse."

"Yes; she found Bob Yorke there and nursed him all the time, they say."

"I wonder if they were in love."

"Oh, I don't know; they say, years ago, before he was married, they used to be together a great deal. There never was any engagement, so mamma says. His wife went to Europe while he was down there."

"Yes; isn't it terrible the way she's

behaved?"

"I should think so—awful! Will they be married now?"

"Oh, I suppose so."

"But I heard she had left the count already."

Above the whisper of the gathered throng came the grand requiem of the organ, as the people, rising, left the church. How many of them carried away from that noble service its deep and solemn meaning? But one, at least, pale-faced and sad-eyed, a young woman in black, knew that the words of the preacher were true, and that, "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."



INTERPRETERS

OH, sweetly the last wind of day-time is blowing, And breathing on blossoms, and wrinkling the lake; A-flush with the flame of the sun's fiery going, And silver with lilies a-bloom for your sake.

For your sake, my sweetheart, for your sake the sheathing, Of boughs with pale petals and intricate lace; For your sake the magic of Summer's still wreathing, Whose patterns grew plain when I looked on your face.

For me, till I saw you, the lane had no story
I might not translate from the hawthorn buds there;
And the trees stood close-veiling the delicate glory
Of pale Dryad-girls and their wonderful hair.

But, sweet, when I saw you, strange bells fell a-ringing, Strange, beautiful words thrilled and throbbed the world through; And lo! all of beauty was fluting and singing, A-voice with the exquisite language of you!

ZONA GALE.



OF THE SAME MIND

E DITH—I didn't accept Arthur the first time he proposed.

"No."

A LOVE SONG

By Frank Dempster Sherman

SWEETHEART, now the Summertime Turns my fancies all to rhyme.

Now the bird and petaled rose, Every gentle breeze that blows,

Fragrant vine and leafy tree, Each one holds a word for me.

Waving grasses at my feet Yield a whispered message sweet;

Whirr of wing and purl of stream Tempt me forth where all is dream;

Murmurs of the magic spell Linger in the lily's bell;

Clover-top and buttercup Offer sweets for me to sup.

Hums the bee a ditty fine, Drunken with this honey-wine

Sun and shadow, gloom and glow, Keep beside me where I go,

Winning me with visions fair, Weaving verses in the air—

Couplets which, if one could catch, Herrick's lyrics one might match.

Every leaf a secret hides; In each cloud a song abides;

Moon and stars that gem the night Lean down, proffering delight;

Full of similes and tropes, Gathered on their azure slopes.

All I see and know is this World of beauty, wonder, bliss. Summer never used to bring All this ecstasy I sing.

Need I ask her why, to-day, All this rapture, sweetheart, pray?

Ah, I need not question long, When each answer is a song!

Some one near, and some one dear, Speaks the answer I will hear:

It is love, and love alone, Makes the Summer's joy my own!



THAT IS DIFFERENT

FOSDICK dresses very quietly as a rule," said Bunting.
"Well, when he loses a collar-button under the bureau I expect he makes about as much noise as the rest of us," remarked Larkin.



NATURALLY

ONE GIRL—Jack tried to kiss me last night.

ANOTHER—What in the world did you do?

"Oh, I was up in arms in a minute."



AN EXPLANATION

ARTHUR—How did you come to marry a girl you didn't particularly care for?

JACK-I attribute it to the fact that she wanted me worse than I didn't want her.



A FASTIDIOUS EATER

CHIMMIE—What kinder pie do you like best?

MAG—Oh, I dunno. Pumpkin, I guess.

CHIMMIE—Aw, I don't like pumpkin—it musses up yer ears so!

THE LATE SAM PATCH

By Tom P. Morgan

E have all experienced the annoyance of being unable to recall a name, and that sense of undefinable loss and help-lessness which follows our efforts to comb it out of the cobwebs of the past.

We had not thought of its owner before in years. We cared nothing for him when we did know him. He may have been a worthy person, but now we are not even sure that he amounted to that much. We do not care a clam for him personally, where he is nor how he fares, but we should like to know what his name was. It wouldn't advantage us one cent's worth to know, but, hang it, we wish to know just because we can't think of it!

But how vastly more provoking it is to recall a name and not be able to recollect any other fact concerning its possessor! How unpleasant it is to have that bare name, wholly and piteously unclothed with data, without even an individuality to its back, as one might say—and maybe it had previously been a good name, too! rushing around through the caves of memory, seeking the information necessary to set itself right in one's estimation, like a fevered, first-time father careering through the house in the solemn watches of night, clad in wild apprehension and one or two other things; some of the time mounted on an ungovernable rocking-chair, and at other times picking its prongs out of the intricacies of his anatomy; or pursuing the swift and elusive paregoric bottle to its lair. On such occasions the house is turned completely around, and the match-safe is at the other side of the wrong room and as innocent of matches as a frog is of feathers; and the door, which he but a moment ago shut at the east end of the room, is now half open at the west end, and invites him to a vain attempt to go on both sides of it at once and leave half of his misguided person on each side—and so on!

The other evening I happened to think of the name of Sam Patch. I know not why I did so, for I do not owe him anything. I never knew him. I think it likely that some time when I was a boy I must have heard something about him. If I knew what it was then, I have forgotten it now. All I could recall was just that abrupt, rectangular name—Sam Patch.

All that night the name ran through my head, seeking a familiar recollection and finding none, like a frantic bat slashing about in an abandoned garret, flapping among the material ghosts of the long ago, now hitting against an accumulation of misinformation, anon knocking from a remote and dusty shelf a long-lost inspiration, then becoming entangled in strings of dry statistics hanging from the rafters, or rattling the ashes out of a collection of dead hopes, and smashing several cherished ideals; and, finally, utterly exhausted, hanging head downward clear up in the under side of the apex of what an appreciative world calls my bump of humor.

I do not know who Sam Patch was, and I do not suppose I should enjoy the knowledge if I had it. Perhaps I should not care to know him, if I did know him. But, as I do not, I

do. When a name occurs to me in a moment of retrospection, I like to recall the identity and appearance of its owner, even if it is only to hate him. I love to murmur to myself that methinks I see him now, and so forth; it has such a dignified sound, you understand. But in the case of Sam Patch, I am unable to regale myself in that manner.

Where did he have his habitat, I wonder; and what did he do for it? What were his preferences; and what was the color of his hair, if he had one? What was he cured of, and by what? What did he do, and why; and, if not, also why? When was his day, and how did he occupy it? Perhaps, though, he was not a man at all. Perchance he was a race-horse—the name has something of that flavor—or a bicycle, or a once new-fangled, but now obsolete, wash-

ing machine. Even, he may have been a brand of oat-meal, though it hardly sounds likely. I can scarcely believe he was a Pullman car; still, it is possible. He could appropriately enough have been a yacht, or a popular song. He may even have been an automobile, but, if so, he was not invented at the time I think he existed; so I judge that lets him out. Perhaps, even, he was nothing but one of those lantern-jawed, two-cornered Baptist oaths, with which my New England uncles used to express their righteous indignation.

But whatever or whoever he was or wasn't, and did or didn't, as the case may have been, I am certain it would be of no interest to me if I knew. But because I do not know, I wish to know. That is the way the human mind, as well as my own, usually runs.

26

UNHAPPILY MARRIED

HE—She married a fool with plenty of money.

SHE—Then why isn't she happy?

"It brought him to his senses."



CONSIDERATE

SHE—Why did you ask Belle to go with us?

HE—I saw she was going anyhow, and I didn't wish her to feel mean over it.



A SURE THING

FLUBDUBBE—Do you suppose that girl Bilkins is to marry is as rich as she is said to be?

PINHEDDE—No question about it—I know Bilkins.

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THE TURN OF THE WHEEL

By Frank Lee Benedict

five, a widow, a famous beauty and exceptionally clever, even in this land of clever women. She had married at twenty, and her husband had died within the year, leaving a colossal fortune entirely at her disposal. She had not loved George Vincent, nor had she married him for his money. Three potent influences had urged her on: his great love for her, the iron will of her stepmother and the fact that, young as she was, life looked empty and desolate, in spite of position and social success.

She had spent the last two years in Europe, with the world of society at her feet, had refused several coronets and their incumbrances, and this Winter, finding herself as tired of Nice as she was of visits in English country houses, had returned to New York shortly before the beginning of Lent. Her sister-in-law accompanied her, for the two were inseparable and thoroughly sympathetic, though Mrs. Raynor was the elder by twenty years. Both possessed the capacity for feminine friendship so common among American women, which, however, according to English female novelists, is denied their foreign sisters.

It was mi-carême evening, and Mrs. Vincent was giving a dinner, because her spoiled cousin, Blanche Sinclair, had begged her to do so. That lady arrived before any of the other guests, looking dainty and pretty enough to have just stepped off a Watteau fan.

"Even Alice Raynor isn't downstairs—Helen, how gorgeous you look!" was her salutation. "I put my newest new gown on in honor of the occasion. I know I am looking my best—but you might just say so, you know."

"You can't stop talking long enough to let me," Mrs. Vincent said, laughing. "I never before knew you to be in advance of the hour."

"My dear, I am quite frantic. That wretched Pinçon has sent me her bill; it's twelve hundred more than it ought to be, and she insists on having the money at once, the wretch! And Sydney, in his last letter, begged me not to ask for any more this month."

"Not unreasonable, considering the amount he left at your disposal."

"My dear, it didn't cover half; but I hate to worry him when he is away for his health. And, oh, if you would help me——"

"Of course I will; but, Blanche—I'm not scolding; only, you ought not to be so extravagant—a husband as kind as yours deserves better treatment."

"I mean to be so good and wise. Now you are home again, you will keep me straight. And I may have the money?"

"I will come to breakfast and bring you a cheque."

"You are the dearest girl!" Mrs. Sinclair cried, in high spirits at once.

She had been accustomed all her life to putting her troubles on her cousin. She was several years the younger, and the two had been brought up together, as Helen's stepmother had been Blanche's guardian and relative. Everybody had spoiled her from childhood, and her husband displayed the same indulgence, though she must often have tried him severely during

their two years of married life, with her extravagance, her flirtations and her general wilfulness.

"Does Ralph Herbert know that you invited Jock Deerforth?" she

asked

Mrs. Vincent lifted her eyebrows in haughty surprise, as she answered: "I am not aware that Ralph's being our forty-fourth cousin—if he is so near—gives him the privilege of arranging my dinner list."

"As if he would venture! He is the one person you ever quarrel with—and he is always so nice! You ought to have fallen in love with each other; but you never would, just because it

might have seemed natural."

"Not to either of us, certainly,"

Mrs. Vincent replied.

"Ralph always keeps Deerforth at arm's length, though quite civil in his grand way," Blanche went on. "Now, Jock isn't nearly so black as he is painted, and he goes everywhere. I was so glad you let me introduce him. And you like him, don't you?"

"He has nice manners, and he is bright and witty. As I have known him only a fortnight, you can't expect

me to say more."

Mrs. Raynor entered at this moment, and with her came a pretty, dumpy little woman, who somehow reminded one of a white pigeon that has too

many feathers.

"Oh, dear me!" sighed the dumpy little woman; "I feel as if I were coming to bits, though Alice Raynor has just set me to rights! How are you, Helen? You look lovely, and so does Blanche—and how your things do stay where they are put! Mine never will."

"Ralph Herbert says he means to carry a basket about to put your

pieces in," laughed Blanche.

"I need one," said Mrs. Liscome, dropping into a chair. "But I never shall need it to put Ralph's feelings in, for he has none."

"A more sensitive or a kinder man never lived," returned Mrs. Raynor, who was tall and imposing enough for her words always to carry weight. "You will agree with me there, Helen?"

"Oh, no doubt," Mrs. Vincent re-

plied, indifferently.

"He is too perfect—it tires me always to look up!" cried Mrs. Sinclair. "Now, Jock Deerforth——"

"Hush!" interrupted Mrs. Vincent.

The doors opened and several gentlemen entered. Ralph Herbert was the last to arrive, and Mrs. Vincent caught a faint expression of surprise on his face—invisible to any one who did not know him so well as she—at the sight of Jock Deerforth. Nobody ever presumed to hint disapproval of her actions, save this far-away relative, and when he ventured to do so she was immediately seized with a desire to show her disregard of an opinion which, in reality, she valued very highly. Presently she heard some words exchanged between the two men which were not noticed by the others.

"You look as surprised to see me here as if we had not met in a month, Herbert," said Jock Deerforth, with the drawl that was not affectation, but the result of a long struggle to overcome a lisp.

"I think you must be judging my feelings by your own," rejoined Her-

bert. Then they both laughed.

A sudden resolve crystallized in Mrs. Vincent's mind, and she at once acted on it. "Mr. Deerforth," she said, "as this is the first time I have had the pleasure of your company at dinner, you will be doomed to give me your arm. Mrs. Raynor, you can have Mr. Herbert to yourself, and as you are the man of the house, my dear, I shall go first! I will have no horrid English custom interfere with my feminine rights."

"Helen is in one of her moods—she has been for two days," Mrs. Raynor said, as she and Herbert walked far enough behind the other guests to speak freely—an old habit of theirs. "I am antiquated, wedded to precedents; I don't like eight men

and four women at dinner."

"Helen is her own precedent, al-

ways," returned Herbert. "If she thinks she has surprised us, she will be happy. Who is that good-looking foreigner with Blanche Sinclair?"

"Count von Waldeck, a relative of the German Ambassador. Blanche met him in Washington a few weeks ago; she made him come on for the dinner and Madame Aguados's micarême ball."

"So Helen is consoling Deerforth? Blanche and he had a tremendous flirtation before you came back."

"I fancy he needs no consoling; from what I hear, it is Sinclair rather than Blanche who took to him. But, then, Blanche's flirtations are very short-lived. She does the most imprudent things, but just when people begin to gossip a new man comes to the front."

"Yes; she has no more idea of being in earnest than has a kitten," Herbert replied. "Everybody recognizes that, so no one ever censures her very severely; she is little more than a grown-up child—a naughty one."

"You couldn't say that for Helen."
"She would be furious if I did. The courage of her acts is one of Helen's strongest characteristics."

"She has been all wrong, somehow, ever since we got home," sighed Mrs.

Raynor.

"And to let that Deerforth suppose from the way she behaves that he is to consider himself on a friendly footing in the house! There is one comfort—he is certain to receive an awful snub within a week."

"From present appearances," returned Herbert, calmly, "he will be in a position to snub you and me, rather than to receive any snub from Helen."

A very handsome man he was, this guest whose presence proved distasteful to Helen Vincent's best two friends. He possessed a gift of fascination that influenced his own sex as well as women; yet, in some indescribable fashion, nature had labeled him dangerous. He was not more than thirty, had made two fortunes

in Wall street, and at one time wagers were laid as to whether he would land among the billionaires or in Sing Sing. Now, however, there was no talk of his taking the latter journey. His wife had gone to Paris nearly a year before, and everybody expected her to institute proceedings for a divorce. In the meantime, Jock posed as the victim of her cold perfections and his own poetic sensibilities. He said there was nothing he wished so much as to have some good woman teach him to be good; and a great many women of various shades of goodness had attempted the task.

"It was so kind of you to invite me!" he said to his hostess. "I know you are prejudiced against me, which makes it all the kinder."

"That won't answer, Mr. Deerforth," Mrs. Vincent replied; "you will have to find something newer. Other people's opinions don't weigh a straw with me; my treatment will depend on yourself."

For a while there was no general conversation, but Mrs. Sinclair opened the way by saying, in her clear, soft voice: "You have found a very fair substitute for happiness, Helen: two men to each woman, and Adela Liscome's husband and mine safe in Florida."

"Why must husbands and mothersin-law always be ill spoken of?" asked Jock Deerforth. "The maters are usually much nicer than their daughters and an American makes the most malleable husband that the heart of woman could desire."

Toward the close of the dinner a note was handed Mrs. Vincent, with the information that it required an immediate answer.

"From Madame Aguados," she said

"Good heavens!" cried Mrs. Sinclair. "I am sure some dreadful thing has happened, and we shall be cheated out of our *mi-carême* ball."

"Not quite so bad," rejoined Mrs. Vincent, looking up from the page. "Mr. Surrey was to have led the

cotillion with me and he has chosen this occasion to sprain his ankle so like a man!"

"Of course," said Ralph Herbert; "and a woman always considers a man's misfortune much worse than a crime."

"It is as unpardonable as a blunder," added Mrs. Sinclair. "What will ma-

dame do, Helen?"

"She asks me to select some one," returned Mrs. Vincent, with a quick glance at Herbert, unnoticed by the others.

"The woods are full of boys whose brains have lodged in their heels," that gentleman said to Mrs. Raynor, loudly enough to be heard by all.

Mrs. Sinclair looked up and met

Jock Deerforth's eyes.

"Mr. Deerforth is the best stepper I know," she said, "and he really holds one well—which is more than can be granted for Archie Surrey."

"And possibly my brains lodged in my heels, which would account for my never being able to find them," rejoined Jock, with his pleasant laugh.

"Then will you make use of them in my behalf, Mr. Deerforth?" Mrs. Vincent cried, with more eagerness than she often displayed. "I shall be infinitely obliged, and so will madame."

She looked defiantly at Herbert, but he was speaking to Mrs. Raynor, apparently oblivious of the fiery glance.

"And I shall be more happy than Mrs. Vincent," said Deerforth, exult-

ing inwardly.

Verily, the gods were fighting in his favor! Archie Surrey should have a tip to console him for his accident. Jock could be amazingly good-natured on occasion.

But never in his life had he been so surprised as he was by Mrs. Vincent—puzzled, too, and sorely afraid of being duped or deceived by his masculine vanity. He had expected pride and coldness, yet—vanity aside—their acquaintance began on the treacherous ground of incipient flirtation. What did she mean? Was she working for,

or against, Blanche Sinclair? Or was she attracted? But what was the use of wondering? At all events, he had his chance, and experience had taught him that in Wall street or a lady's boudoir success, as a rule, meant taking advantage of the chance when it came.

He had sought to meet Helen before she went abroad, but had not succeeded in being presented. And now she was back, more beautiful than before, and here he was in her house, seated beside her. If only he could know that Ralph Herbert was pained as well as annoyed! Jock had never hated any other man as he hated that favorite of fortune, born to an unassailable position, powerful, the soul of honor and always so exasperatingly civil, yet holding him so completely at an immeasurable distance. that company in which he was chief director, and that knowledge of its plans so necessary to Jock—he must obtain it! He was on the right track at last: then-

But dinner was over, and he heard Blanche Sinclair saying: "Now, don't be English, Helen; show that Paris has contaminated you a little—these men don't wish to smoke alone!"

"In the library, then," returned Mrs. Vincent, leading the way as the doors of a room at the side were opened. "I know you and Adela wish your cigarettes."

"You haven't the weakness, Mrs. Vincent?" Deerforth asked, as the two

ladies began to smoke.

Herbert was standing close by, and Mrs. Vincent saw him look at Deerforth with an expression which said plainly that the bare suggestion was an impertinence. This decided her answer.

"I have not the habit," she replied, but simply because I have no habits; I am too changeable to make any. I will have a cigarette now, though."

She looked at Mrs. Raynor, but that sagacious lady, instead of betraying surprise or disapproval as Mrs. Vincent expected, appeared placidly indifferent.

"I am glad to see you smoke," Herbert said, when he could speak unheard by the others. "I decided some time since that you were deteriorating rapidly; it is always flattering to human vanity to have an impression confirmed."

"And I am charmed if I have offered yours fresh food—I know it is insatiable," she rejoined, in a lazy voice, belied by the expression of her eyes.

"Are you going to quarrel with me at this late day for telling you the truth?" he asked, half laughing.

"Oh, no! I am always glad when you are rude; it confirms my opinion of you, formed a long while ago," she retorted.

"I won't take this opportunity to ask what it is," Herbert said, somewhat seriously. "Oh, Helen, Helen, what a combination of common sense and unreasonableness you are!"

"Will you forgive me if I suggest that you are a little tiresome—just a little?" she rejoined. "Would you mind talking to Adela Liscome? Then I can have Mr. Deerforth to myself—that is what I asked him for."

That gentleman sauntered up at the instant, saying: "Mrs. Raynor has been abusing my trade, Mrs. Vincent! She declares that Nemesis—I think that was the name of the unpleasant old goddess—is lying in wait for all of us Wall-street wretches. Now I have a whole pantheon of deities, but not an ill-natured one among them."

"If you made less noise in your pandemonium, you might hear their mill sometimes," Mrs. Raynor called after him.

"Broken, long ago, I am sure," said Deerforth.

"No," rejoined Herbert, "the wheel keeps turning as silently, as relentlessly as ever. Mrs. Vincent, I must say good night."

His hostess nodded and vouchsafed him two fingers, over which he bowed with grave courtesy.

"Helen, make him promise to come to Madame Aguados's!" cried Mrs. Sinclair.

"He must," said Mrs. Vincent, "because I wish him to see Mr. Deerforth and myself in our triumph."

"Then my destiny is settled," re-

turned Herbert.

As he was leaving the room, he heard Mrs. Vincent say, in a voice that she meant to be audible to his ears: "Now tell me about your pantheon, Mr. Deerforth! The gods must necessarily be old, but their devotee is new—to me."

Ralph Herbert sighed heavily as he stepped into his cab and drove away to his club. He made his appearance late at the ball, and exasperated Mrs. Vincent by his congratulations, and Jock Deerforth still more by his apparent indifference to the whole matter.

Mrs. Liscome managed to get into difficulty with her clothes, and Herbert covered her retreat into a window-recess, its thick curtains forming a screen behind which Mrs. Raynor put her in order. Blanche Sinclair flirted with her young German, until she turned his head more hopelessly than ever, and people's open curiosity added to the wicked little woman's enjoyment.

The brilliant figures took their course, and Deerforth devoted as much energy to making his temporary leadership a startling success as if it had been one of the daring speculations with which he had astonished the business world within the past few years.

The ball would rank among the season's triumphs, but the pretty scene looked tame and dull enough to Herbert.

"You might be Diogenes in modern dress," said Mrs. Raynor.

"The cynic wouldn't have lighted his lantern here," he answered. "I am tired and shall take my stupidity home. So, good night, wisest of women."

Ralph Herbert heard the clocks striking two as he mounted his own door-step. He lived down in Washington Square, in the house in which three generations of his family had lived before him. The size of the mansion involved an establishment which it seemed absurd for a bachelor of five-and-thirty to keep up, but Herbert was both a conservative and an imaginative man. He would not allow strangers to live in the home he loved, and among his servants were several who had been there when he was born.

His temperament was an odd combination of the practical and poetic. He had studied both law and medicine and, though he practised neither profession, between literary pursuits and the personal management of his property—he was a very rich man, even for these days—he had ample occupation.

To-night he found himself in an unusual mood—depressed and inclined to be morbid over the one lack in his successful life, a lack undreamed of by others, yet keen enough to take the zest and savor out of existence, strong and well-balanced as his nature was.

"I needn't be an utter fool at my age," he said to himself, as he put his latch-key into the lock. "I have known since she was a girl that Helen would never care for me, and she has never dreamed that I care—she doesn't believe I could love anybody."

The lights were burning low in the halls and the old house was more than still. Herbert remembered that his valet had asked leave to stay with a sick relative, promising to return early in the morning. He went at once upstairs, for, though he often read till nearly daylight, this was always in his dressing-room. He was so methodical in his habits that the servants knew he never entered the library after he had been out in the evening. His own apartments looked bright and inviting. He made himself comfortable in smoking-jacket and slippers, and sat down to read. But he could not rest; his mind fastened itself persistently on one thought—Helen Vincent. denly he was seized with an irresistible desire to look at a miniature, painted when she was a young girl, that hung in a little room off the library.

He went down-stairs, smiling at his

own folly, pushed back the portières and entered the darkened room, taking out his match-safe to light the gas. But there was a light in his study—he could see it distinctly through the curtains that hung over the arch. He stepped cautiously forward; his slippered feet made no sound on the thick carpet. Through a gap in the draperies he could look into the room beyond.

He saw first that the door of a safe set into the wall was open; then, by a table, at a short distance, he saw his valet seated, busily engaged in copying a paper spread out before him. The man worked swiftly, and Herbert watched in silence until the paper was replaced in its envelope and deftly sealed. Herbert waited while the man put the safe in perfect order and was about to close the door; then he said, composedly:

"You can leave that, Soper."

The man turned and saw his master standing by the table. The poor wretch in his abject terror grasped a chair for support, but his legs gave way and he fell on the floor. When he could raise himself, Herbert said: "Sit down—don't try to speak yet."

He lighted a cigar and began to smoke, while the man stared at him, shaking from head to foot, making no effort to stir from the chair into which he had sunk.

A carafe of half-frozen water was on the table; Herbert poured out a glass and set it within reach of the fellow, who had to try several times before he could hold the tumbler and manage to swallow. The hereditary servility of the trained English servant was so ingrained in him that his first words, half-unconsciously spoken, were fairly ludicrous under the circumstances.

"I beg pardon for making you so much trouble, sir," he said, as well as his chattering teeth would permit.

"It seems to be I who am making you trouble, Soper," returned Herbert; "I may have to make you more—that will depend on yourself."

"Sir, sir, it is the first time——"

"Because you could not find the duplicate key before. You have been

very persevering and more than ingenious to find it at all."

"I—I suppose you mean to send me

to prison, sir," Soper groaned.

"I have no such intention at present," returned Herbert, still tranquilly smoking. "Of course, you have not done this for yourself—you could get no good out of it that way."

"No, sir-no, sir! And you have

been a kind master-"

"Drop that, Soper! What I wish is to know who hired you—though I am sure already. That paper you copied—no, I don't wish it—was minutes connected with the Iota Company."

Soper nodded, in speechless misery.

"Just now the thing is to make a clean breast of it. You told me once you were trying to save money to go to Australia—I am going to give you the chance, later, between that and Sing Sing."

Soper could only groan again.

"You have been bought at a good price—you are too weak to have the making of an independent criminal in you. Now, I propose to let you earn your money from the man who hired you—and I, too, mean to pay you, if you do exactly as I wish."

"Anything, sir, if you will have mercy. But, sir, if he finds out——"

"Of course, he has a hold on you. But, don't you see, he will be helpless when, between us, I have got him in my fingers!"

"Only tell me what to do, sir!"

"Make a clean breast of it! Sit still and get your miserable wits back,

while I look at something."

Herbert stood for a while with his back turned on the wretched man, studying the miniature; then he looked around and said: "You can talk quietly now, Soper; I am ready to listen."

Η.

Ir was one of Mrs. Vincent's busy mornings with her secretary and her voluminous daily correspondence. She would have been incensed if anybody had called her a philanthropist, but no one could have employed a great fortune in a wiser or more practical way than did she.

Nearly four weeks had passed since mi-carême, and during that time Deerforth had been an assiduous visitor at her house. In the beginning she had wished to please Blanche and, if she could, vex Ralph Herbert, though she knew in advance that his annoyance would hurt her. But, so far from showing disapproval, he seemed profoundly indifferent, and that was still harder to bear. She was so much occupied with the possible effect of her conduct on Ralph that she did not take into consideration, as she would ordinarily have done, the manner in which it might strike Deerforth. She liked him, too—his almost boyish impulsiveness seemed so genuine-and the consciousness that she had been prejudiced against him made her wish to offer amends.

Accustomed as she was to adulation, she seldom gave men credit for being serious, and she never dreamed that Deerforth would presume to fall in love with her. Nevertheless, he had done so, and had begun to dream of a possible future that looked more entrancing than any other he had ever imagined—so many divorced men and women in society had married again! Now, for the first time, he longed for freedom as eagerly as did his wife. She should have her divorce, if he could be sure of winning Mrs. Vincent -and her millions; though, to do Jock justice, it must be admitted that he would have been eager to marry her if she had not possessed a penny.

He was more wildly in love than he had ever been in his life, and between his engrossing passion and his business schemes he was busy enough. Both in his dreams and his plots the thought of defeating Ralph Herbert had always a prominent place.

Mrs. Vincent was interrupted by a note from Deerforth, accompanied by a rare old book that she had wished to see. Sending the volume made an excuse for writing, and a request for some foreign address she had promised

to give him obliged her to answer the

witty little epistle.

She had scarcely settled to work again when she was called to the telephone by Blanche Sinclair. had to listen to various half-finished, excited sentences, while her questions received exasperatingly incoherent an-But she made out that her cousin was coming to her house at once and must see her alone, on a matter of the greatest importance. Blanche was evidently in a state of intense excitement, but Helen was too accustomed to seeing her excited over the merest trifle to feel particularly anxious, although the little lady announced that the world had come to an end. Still, as the two had been at a dinner together the night before, with Blanche in her highest spirits, radiant in a wickedly extravagant gown, it was difficult to believe that anything very terrible had happened in the interval.

Mrs. Vincent changed her mind, however, when, half an hour later, Blanche entered the boudoir, white as a ghost, her eyes dilated with terror and suffering. She did not weep and give way to hysterics, as most pink-and-white creatures would have done, and her very self-control was a proof to Helen of the gravity of the situation.

Helen made her cousin sit down; then she said quietly, in a voice full of sympathy and tenderness: "Tell me as soon as you can. Whatever I can do, I will—you know that. Only, tell me all—everything."

"I must—but you will never forgive me," shivered Blanche. She struggled hard to retain her selfcontrol and, when she could speak, said, in a half-whisper: "Sydney will be home to-night; he writes that he wants—he wants—"

Her voice died in an inarticulate murmur. Helen was on her knees now by the trembling woman and put both arms protectingly about her, saying:

"I know it is nothing you need be afraid to tell me, dear; it isn't the

story we have both heard so often from other women."

"No—no! But, oh, Helen, it is so terrible! I won't sit here and choke like a frightened baby! Don't look at me! He wants some bonds he left with me to send to the bank—he had forgotten them till just as he was leaving home, and—and——"

"And you can't find them—you didn't send them? But they can't be lost! Don't be so frightened, Blanche!"

"I—what is the word?" She put her hands helplessly to her head. "Helen, I raised money on them——"

"You hypothecated them, you mean?"

Blanche nodded, her face hidden in her hands.

"And—they were not his—but I did not know when I used them—"

"They can be got back. How much money did you get?"

"Ten thousand dollars—"

"Who has them?" Mrs. Vincent demanded, imperatively; "don't hesitate."

"Wait—let me tell it in my way—I shall die if you are angry! I—I—played again at that dreadful club—I owed Mrs. Ransom two thousand—you know what a harpy she is! And I had taken some flyers in—oh, I forget! I had to raise ten thousand dollars—and Jock Deerforth——"

"Don't say you borrowed money from him! And, if he persuaded you to gamble in stocks, he never enters my doors again."

"No—no! He advised me not to! But I had to have the money that very day—it was just before you came back—I didn't know which way to turn. I remembered the bonds—I had meant to take them to the bank—but I had forgotten."

"And you thought you could re-

place them in time?"

"Yes—I was sure of making a large sum—and everything fell through—I have lost nearly ten thousand more. But the bonds! If I don't

have them, I must tell Sydney, and

he will never forgive me!"

"It will be easy enough to get them—we can telephone to the man who holds them. He can send them up here and receive his money."

"But that is why I am so frightened! It is Saturday; nobody is in Wall street after twelve—it is nearly that now. I only had Sydney's letter by the second post."

"I shall telephone. Who is the

man? what is his number?"

"I must send to Deerforth---"

"You said it was not he. Oh, Blanche, don't tell me half-truths!"

"I am telling the truth. He attended to raising the money—I don't know the man's name. Indeed, indeed, I would not have taken it from Jock."

"Well, I shall telephone to him. Tell me what bonds they were. I telephone too often to all sorts of men about business to have it make any difference if anybody overhears. I shall ask him to send them at once."

Blanche followed her into the next room, looking like another creature than the frightened woman of a few moments before. Helen would help her—she did not even seem angry, or, worse, contemptuous; so Blanche could be at ease. With her, repose of conscience meant not losing other people's esteem, especially that of her husband and Helen, of whose directness and rigid ideas as to truth and honesty she stood greatly in awe.

Mrs. Vincent paused as she was

about to ring the telephone bell.

"Your fright made me lose my common sense," she said. "Since it is Saturday you are safe enough; Sydney cannot send to the bank until Monday."

"But Mr. Ames—that's the president—is coming to the house to-night. Sydney will tell him he wants the bonds, then it will all come out."

"Oh, in that case, look up the telephone number of Mr. Deerforth's office!"

The answer came that Mr. Deerforth had already left—he was going directly home. The clerk was certain, because Mr. Deerforth was expecting a telegram, which he had ordered to be sent to him the moment it arrived; he had said he would wait until it came.

"Then I am lost!" moaned Blanche, dropping into a chair, as limp and miserable as when she arrived. "It is twelve now—he can't get the things to-day—I shall die or go crazy!"

"I think I shall shake you in a moment!" cried Mrs. Vincent. "Of course, Mr. Deerforth will manage to get them! Only, we must see him—I can't telephone all the particulars."

Again the answer to a question brought a disappointment. Mr. Deerforth had not come in; he was certain, however, to be there within half an hour, as he had a business appointment. Blanche was in the depths of despair. She knew that, if they waited till he could come to them, it would be too late, and she was so frantic that she fairly infected her cousin with her terror.

"We will take the elevated down to Forty-second street and drive to his house," Helen said. "Pleasant gossip it will make if anybody sees us—and some one is sure to see us—but at least we shall save time. I can be ready in five minutes. Stop trembling and help me to dress; I don't wish Agatha to see you looking like this. Do learn to have the courage of your acts!"

"If you begin to be angry and scold me, I shall be utterly helpless," the little woman vowed, ready to give way to hysterics if there were no other

means of avoiding a lecture.

"It is useless to scold—for you regard any advice as a scolding—I learned that a long while ago," Mrs. Vincent said, already busy putting on a street gown. "I shall say just one thing, hard-hearted as you will think it. This is the last gaming debt I shall ever help you about; but, if you will agree not to speculate again, I will add to the allowance Sydney makes you, though heaven knows it is large enough to satisfy two sane women—if there are two in the world."

"I do believe I shall hate the very word "speculate" as long as I live," Blanche declared. "If only I can get safely out of this scrape, I will let

nothing tempt me again.'

"At least, I would advise you not to meddle with other people's property," said Mrs. Vincent, drily; "there is so strong and general a prejudice against it that doing so sometimes proves a short road to prison."

"What awful things you say, Helen! I am sure I did not think I was doing anything so very dreadful when I took the bonds. I meant to put them back; it seemed just borrowing from

my husband."

"But you have not been able to redeem them, and they were not his!"

"Oh, how cruel of you to remind me! I was feeling easier; now I am more frightened than ever. I shall go mad—I know I shall!"

She rushed up and down the room in a frenzy, which, Helen knew, was not acting. She knew Blanche would forget her misery as soon as she was out of her strait; and she could no more be made to comprehend the enormity of her deed than if she had been a butterfly.

By the time they were driving to the elevated road her cousin's comforting assurances had restored Blanche's hopefulness, and she chattered almost

as volubly as usual.

"You and Sydney have such odd ideas," she said, in answer to some remark of Mrs. Vincent's. "Sydney cares no more about my flirting than if I were my own grandmother; but the least tiny fib makes him furious!"

"He knows that your flirtations never last long enough to be dangerous; besides, there is something in you that would never let you go wrong, partly because you are not capable of what is called passion—odious word! Then, too, you love Sydney better than you could love anybody except Blanche Sinclair."

"And I love you, too, Helen. If only you and Sydney would not make me so afraid of you! I'm not afraid of any one else! You both scare me into—into—prevarication, very often."

"I admire your ingenuity in choosing your word; but take care you in-

dulge in none about present matters, if you have borrowed money from Mr. Deerforth—or if you have kept anything back. I began to invite him because you asked me to—and I do not think he is half so black as he is painted; but, Blanche, if there is anything you have kept back, own it now; let us settle matters completely."

"Only let me get the bonds, and I shall be the happiest creature in the world!" returned Mrs. Sinclair. "Yes, Jock—oh, Mr. Deerforth, is a very good fellow—if you don't make him angry. Helen, I think Ralph Herbert is furious at your seeing so much of Jock—though one never can tell

what he really feels."

"Nothing whatever; he is too well-balanced to indulge in feelings," Mrs. Vincent said, in a tone which she meant to make scornful, but which was only angry and hurt. She added, quickly: "Alice Raynor and Ralph went off on some expedition a little while before you came."

"Nobody ever had such a sister-inlaw as she is!" cried Blanche. "She is not a bit strait-laced, though she

is so good."

"We have lived together for nearly five years, and I grow fonder of her every day," Mrs. Vincent replied; "but we never meddle with each other."

"And she has plenty of money. You are the two luckiest women in the world," cried Blanche. "Still, I am very well content to keep my Sydney. Oh, if only I have those awful things ready to give him! I sha'n't mind owning that I was careless in forgetting to send them to the bank."

"How amiable of you, to be willing to admit even as much as that!"

Then Blanche had another shivering attack, and when once more consoled, by the assurance that everything should be set right, began to talk gaily again, while Helen sat wondering how such a bundle of inconsistencies managed to hold itself together.

When they had left the train and were driving rapidly through the streets, Blanche grew silent. Mrs. Vincent had leisure to reflect that to

go to Deerforth's house was a proceeding likely to be censured by their most indulgent friends, but she was not a woman to hesitate after she had made up her mind. Then she indulged in bitter thoughts in regard to the meanness and sycophancy of the social world. Because she had a colossal fortune and was a power in society on both sides of the Atlantic, she could with impunity take a step that would have brought dire calamity on the head of another woman.

There was one person who would blame her severely enough—Ralph Herbert; and when she thought of that she would have gone on at any cost. She hoped he would hear of it—he should, if she had to tell him herself. He was always blaming and underrating her, and she was glad to afford him such good reason.

"We shall have to go in," she said, suddenly. "We must explain matters where there is no chance of being

overheard."

"It isn't a bachelor apartment-house," Blanche replied; "the Gordons live there and several other persons we know. Jock has a beautiful apartment on the ground floor—he gave a charming dinner early in the Winter to me and Sydney. We have been there to suppers, too."

"Well, we are going now," rejoined Mrs. Vincent, with an emphasis and defiance due to her thought of Ralph

Herbert.

"Don't speak as if you were angry with me," pleaded her cousin. "I do appreciate your goodness—I'll never

try you in this way again."

"My dear, I was not thinking of you—and I am not angry. If you have told me everything, very well; there is nothing so dangerous and so exasperating as half-truths; downright false-hoods do much less harm."

"Here we are!" Blanche exclaimed,

as the carriage stopped.

III

WHILE Mrs. Vincent had been preparing for her undesirable expedition, Jock Deerforth reached his house. As he got out of the cab he saw Herbert's valet mounting the steps. Before the man could ring the bell, Deerforth was at his side, saying, sternly:

"I told you never to come here,

Soper."

"Yes, sir; but Mr. Herbert sent me with a note for Mrs. Gordon—and I have some news for you, sir," replied Soper, lifting his hat.

"Don't ring; I have my key," said

Deerforth.

There was no one in the hall as they entered. Deerforth let himself into his own apartment and led the way to his dressing-room.

"I copied this last night, sir," said Soper, softly, as he removed a paper

from his pocket.

Deerforth took it, read the page quickly, and said, in a satisfied tone:

"That is all right; it confirms the other information you obtained. You have done very well, Soper—very well; I sha'n't want anything more of you."

"I am glad both ways, sir," Soper answered, in his cringing fashion.

"I dare say you are," Deerforth

said, indifferently.

He crossed the room to where an odd, antique cabinet stood, the receptacle for his most private letters, and laid the paper carefully away. From another compartment he took a sheaf of bank-notes, counted out several and went back.

"You will find me better than my word, Soper," he said, as he sat down at a writing-table. "I promised you two thousand dollars—here they are, and five hundred additional. You can go to Australia, or the—anywhere you like—if you are tired of Mr. Herbert. You are an invaluable man; but I won't engage you myself, if you think of leaving your present place."

"Yes, sir; thank you, sir," Soper replied, in his most respectful tone. "And since you are satisfied, sir, may I remind you of the letter you were to give me back, if I succeeded in

finding out what you wanted to know?"

"You assumed that I was to do so, Soper," Deerforth said, as he lighted a cigarette. "All things considered, I propose to keep the little document."

Jock loved power in any form; he derived a certain satisfaction in watching the effect of his words on the wretched man, who turned a queer, greenish white between anger and fear.

"I thought, sir," he said, moistening his dry lips with his tongue, "I thought my having the letter was

part of the bargain.'

"Was that your idea?" questioned his tormentor, blowing out a succession of smoke-rings. "The letter is quite safe with me, Soper—I should never use it unless you were to force me to do so, say by any threat or attempt at coercion, as if you fancied our little transaction had given you a hold on me."

"But-Mr. Deerforth-sir!"

The pleading face and threatening eyes only confirmed Deerforth in his resolve, and he said, with his slight drawl accentuated, as it always was when he meant to be unpleasant: "There isn't anything more to say, Soper. I am a very prudent man, and you have prudence enough to appreciate the fact, even if, in this instance, it does cause you a disappointment."

"But, sir, I am going to leave the country—nothing could ever bring me

back to America.'

"It is only the dead that one can be certain will never return, Soper," said Deerforth, smiling amiably. "If I were to receive the melancholy news of your departure from this mundane sphere, I should burn at once every trace of evidence that could cast a blemish on your character."

"I should think a gentleman-

"Don't finish, Soper! You are excited and might say something you would regret," interrupted Deerforth, still smiling. "You'd better go now; I am busy this morning. If I can ever

do anything for you, let me know a recommendation, or any matter of that sort."

The eyes of the two men met—the polished man of the world, with the tiger instincts in him as powerful as they had been in some prehistoric ancestor; and the descendant of a long down-trodden class, a creature whom heredity had stamped with the treachery and cowardice of a dogwolf. The eyes of the weaker animal speedily fell under the other's glance, and Soper crept stealthily out of the room without a word.

Deerforth finished his cigarette, then read again the notes which his visitor had brought, and put them away in a compartment of the cabinet, feeling a thrill of satisfaction as the springlock snapped under the pressure of his long, slender fingers that were supple and strong as steel.

"Of course, your company must buy up the Nemerick road, Mr. Ralph Herbert," was his thought, as he lighted a fresh cigarette. shortest one you could build to your mine would be three miles longer and ruinously expensive! You shown your wisdom in impressing that on the directors! I'd like to your face when you learn that Jock Deerforth is the Nemerick Company in his own person, and that you must accept his terms. Besides the cost of a new road, you couldn't get it in running order by the time your lease demands that the mine shall be in full blast. A week from to-day, Mr. Herbert—just a week from today—you shall find yourself beaten as you never were in your life—and it sha'n't be my last triumph over you."

He passed into the library and met his butler, who was carrying some

letters.

"I did not know you were in, sir," the man said; "I was going to lay these on your table. A telegram from the office, sir—and, oh, there came a telephone message——"

"Damn the telephone message!" Deerforth exclaimed, catching up the

telegram and tearing it open.

"Yes, sir, but-"

"Go out!" ordered Deerforth, in a voice that sent the man away as quickly as if he had been impelled by

some unseen power.

Jock read the message-more completely satisfactory than he had ventured to hope. His face beamed like a boy's. What luck he was having of late! every scheme prospered! In spite of his vaunted prudence, Jock was one of the most impulsive of men; half his bold ventures were the result of momentary daring; his evil deeds, like his good actions, were seldom premeditated. It is very possible that, if the discomfited Soper had been inspired to defer his visit till this moment, he might have carried away the damning evidence for which he would willingly have bartered his soul.

Jock's thoughts flew on to Mrs. Vincent. He had beaten Herbert—he would win another victory over him, for the fellow loved the beautiful woman. No one else suspected—even her keen womanly intuitions had failed to warn Helen herself—but Jock was sure—sure!

And, while he stood there dreaming, Mrs. Vincent and Blanche Sinclair had

descended at his door.

The janitor was standing on the steps as they went up. He believed that Mr. Deerforth had not returned, but he ushered the ladies into the hall. just as a boy in buttons was coming out of a small reception-room. very frightened small boy he was at the moment. He had been sent into the room by the butler with a vase of flowers and, while examining something on the table, had upset a bottle of ink over the green-and-white cover; now he was rushing in search of means to repair the misfortune as best he He was nearly in tears when he showed the ladies in, and the state of the table made the cause of his agitation evident.

"You spilled the ink," Mrs. Vincent said, kindly; "never mind—I will ask Mr. Deerforth to forgive you. Give

him this card."

"Oh, don't touch your jacket!" cried Mrs. Sinclair. "You have made a great black spot already!"

Mrs. Vincent laid the card on a little tray, and the lad hurried away with it. But he dared not face the butler till he had washed his hands, and he escaped into a side passage that led to

the servants' quarters.

"I hope we needn't wait," Blanche said. "If somebody should come!"

"I told you a little while ago that one must have the courage of one's

acts," returned Mrs. Vincent.

"Yes—but—I was so frightened! As we came up the steps, a lady and gentleman turned the corner—oh, Helen, it looked like Alice and Ralph Herbert—indeed, it did!"

"He is not a bogey that you can frighten me with," Mrs. Vincent said, haughtily. "My actions are none of Mr. Herbert's business, and his opinion of them is of no importance to me."

The murmur of voices reached Jock Deerforth's ear in the library, and he waited a moment for a servant to appear with the visitors' names. None came, but he heard the voices again—women's voices. He stepped quickly toward the doors that led into the reception-room, and, as he turned the knob, Mrs. Raynor and Ralph Herbert entered from the hall. Blanche gave a gasping cry, and Helen stood looking full at the pair. Her face grew somewhat pale, though the expression of her eyes showed that it was from anger, not alarm.

Before any one could speak, Deerforth opened the library door and stood regarding the four with a surprise that he could not conceal.

"It looks as if we had come to act an impromptu charade, Deerforth," Ralph Herbert said, laughingly. "Mrs. Sinclair wished to speak to you, so we all came in!"

"I am only too happy to see you," Jock replied, smiling at Mrs. Vincent.

"How do you do, Mr. Deerforth?" that lady inquired, extending her hand as he reached her side. "It is I, not Mrs. Sinclair, who wishes to speak to you—by yourself, too, please.

Take me into another room—these friendly guardians can wait here,

unless they lose patience."

"We will go into the library," said Jock, sorely puzzled, but able now to hide his astonishment and seem only

delighted to see his guests.

As Mrs. Vincent took his proffered arm she glanced again at Herbert. This time the expression in her eyes was like that with which a duelist might regard his opponent as their swords cross in preparatory salute. She received in return for her fiery glance a smile, half-amused, half of the forbearance with which a wise elder might receive the petulant outburst of a spoiled child.

"We never lose patience," he said,

"And it is such a pretty room to

wait in!" added Mrs. Raynor.

"And I wish you were both in Jericho," said Blanche Sinclair; but she did not make her polite wish audible.

"Somebody has been doing an ink drawing on the table-cover," observed Herbert. "It looks like a map of South America."

"That, also," rejoined Mrs. Vincent, "I shall explain—to Mr. Deerforth."

Jock's heart beat a triumphant quickstep as he led her away. Helen's composure had quieted Blanche Sinclair's fright; but, lest Mrs. Raynor or Herbert might ask some embarrassing question, she elected to feign displeasure at their appearance. She turned her back on them both, sat down at the table and pretended to write a letter; but, as neither paid any attention, she soon grew tired of scribbling incoherent sentences and joined in their conversation with her usual volubility.

Mrs. Vincent and Deerforth appeared in the course of twenty minutes, and a glance from the former told Blanche that everything had been satisfactorily settled.

"I am glad you have done with

your mysteries," she cried, gaily.
"I am sorry Mrs. Vincent has an engagement," Deerforth said; "I

wished you all to see the Greuze I picked up last Autumn in France.'

He looked at Mrs. Sinclair as he spoke, and she answered in her pretty, impulsive fashion: "You might invite us all to luncheon some day, and we could admire it at our leisure.

"Oh, if you would come!" Jock exclaimed, with an eagerness equal to hers. "Do say you will, Mrs. Vincent."

"It sounds too pleasantly bohemian to refuse," she replied, looking at Herbert to read disapproval in his face; but she met only polite indifference.

"Then, Mrs. Raynor, if you will say 'yes,'" pleaded Deerforth, in his most persuasive voice, "Herbert will be obliged to come."

"Certainly," Mrs. Raynor said; "my years will add an element of respecta-

bility to the affair."

"Won't that be a drawback?" Herbert asked, pleasantly; whereupon Blanche Sinclair threw her card-case at him, and Mrs. Vincent shot him an angry glance.

"Invite Adela Liscome, but no other women," said Mrs. Sinclair. "A few additional men might not be a bad

idea."

"They need not all have German titles, I suppose?" Jock said, inquiringly. "By the way, Count von Waldeck will be back next week—perhaps you did not know that?"

"I shall believe it if I see him at your luncheon," she replied. "But

we have set no day."

"We will let Mr. Deerforth do that, since he is a busy man," rejoined Mrs. Vincent; "only, it must not be before

Thursday."

"How would Saturday suit?—but it is an awfully long way off." The women agreed on that day, and Deerforth added to Herbert: "How about you? Has that blessed company of yours any meeting?"

"I shall be free by two o'clock," Herbert replied. "There will be a meeting early-I believe to decide whether or not the company secures

the old railway."

Mrs. Vincent marveled to hear him say even so much about his affairs to Deerforth, who listened with his eyes fixed on the stained table-cover, afraid to look up lest they should betray his secret exultation.

When the visitors were gone, Jock Deerforth whispered to himself: "Only a week! Ralph Herbert, you will be the most welcome guest that ever sat down at my table, and I'll beat you worse yet, before we have done."

IV

Another Saturday had come at last, though it seemed to Jock Deerforth that it never would arrive. It was near the hour for his guests to appear, and Jock felt as excited as a school-boy waiting for the distribution of prizes, the best of which were certain to fall to his share. No woman could have been more nervously anxious that everything, from the arrangement of the rooms to the table decorations, should be perfect. He had called in a painter to suggest artistic effects, had bought some new hangings for his library at that autocrat's bidding—marvelous things, in price as well as in picturesquenessand the flowers and palms made the apartment seem a miniature Garden of Eden.

Jock meant Mrs. Vincent's first experience as his guest to be memorable; it would be so to another of his visitors, but in a different fashion. Ralph Herbert had never sat at Jock's table, or invited Jock to his house, though the relations between them were always pleasant enough. Jock had never been able to rid himself of an uneasy feeling that Herbert's steady eyes looked straight into his soul, and of late he had grown to hate the man, partly because of Mrs. Vincent, partly because it is human nature to hate those whom one tries to wrong.

But to-day was to witness his first triumph over Herbert; his enemy would be forced to accept the terms he might offer, and his feelings changed in consequence. To have outwitted Herbert was a pleasure to contemplate, as keen as the thought of the immense financial success it included, and Jock began to despise the other for having been tricked. Of the means he had employed, Jock did not even think—nothing but failure or detection could have made his own turpitude apparent to his mind.

A cathedral clock in the anteroom struck two, and the chime reached Deerforth's ears as he entered his library. Von Waldeck and a couple of other men were the first arrivals; presently another man appeared; Herbert would complete the number of the masculine guests. Jock longed to see his face and read therein the discomfiture and anger which even his practised self-control would not be able wholly to conceal.

The four ladies arrived together and, charming as Deerforth's reception of them all was, he managed to make it apparent that the whole affair was really in Mrs. Vincent's honor and that her approval was his touchstone of content.

"I did not dream that we were to be ushered into fairyland," she said, with a smile that fairly made Jock dizzy.

"And then these men dare to talk as if their bachelor abodes were as dreary as the cell of an anchorite!" cried Mrs. Raynor.

"Oh, Deerforth is a magician," von Waldeck declared. "You must not judge us ordinary poor fellows by him."

"Have you any special grievance this morning?" Blanche Sinclair asked, with a mischievous smile, as she seated herself at a little distance from the general group.

The young German followed her, and they began a low-voiced conversation. When Mrs. Sinclair chose to flirt with a man, onlookers were of no more consequence in her eyes than the figures of the wall-paper.

"What has become of Mr. Herbert?" demanded Mrs. Liscome, impersonally, as she glanced anxiously in a mirror, beset as usual by the fear that some portion of her attire might be getting awry.

"He is certain to be here in a moment," Deerforth answered; "one might look for the end of the world if Herbert were late."

But ten minutes passed without that gentleman's appearance, and Jock proposed that they should look at the Greuze, instead of waiting until after luncheon, as he had intended. The picture stood on an easel in a delightful little snuggery, off one end of the library. It was the head of a young girl, with laughing mouth and wistful eyes, altogether bewitching. Von Waldeck declared that it might almost be taken for a portrait of Mrs. Sinclair, and all agreed as to the resemblance.

"I am vain enough in all conscience," that lady avowed, "but not to the extent of believing myself as

pretty as that."

"She knows she is prettier," Deerforth said to Mrs. Vincent, for he had discovered that she was exceedingly fond of the spoiled creature and liked to hear her praised and admired.

"And she knows that we know she knows it," said Mrs. Raynor, as Helen smiled assent to Deerforth's remark.

"She is like my small son," added Mrs. Liscome; "he asked me why I did not take him in earnest when he made believe so hard."

"Oh, Mrs. Sinclair is always in earnest when she makes believe," rejoined Mrs. Vincent, laughing.

"Do you hear that, count?" called

Deerforth.

But the count had returned to the library with Mrs. Sinclair. The smiles of the atrocious little flirt had reduced the impressionable young German to that agreeable stage of imbecility wherein the briefest tête-à-tête became a priceless boon. The others moved away, and Mrs. Vincent and Deerforth were left standing alone.

"I have had no opportunity to thank you," she said, at once; "I wish to do so now. You were very, very kind. I am afraid you had to journey down-town on Saturday to get those papers; but I received them within two hours. All those tiresome

people about, both times I have seen you since, prevented my saying half

I wished to say."

"It was very little trouble," Jock replied; "I wish it had been more—it would have added to the pleasure of trying to oblige you; but really I deserve no thanks on the first score. It will always be the greatest possible favor if you will call on me when there is anything I can do in your service." Then he laughed—it was easy for him to laugh to-day. "All that sounds so ridiculously stilted; but you believe me, don't you?"

"Certainly I do, in spite of our belonging to an unbelieving generation;

and it is very pleasant."

"And you can, always! Indeed, indeed, Mrs. Vincent, I am a very different fellow at bottom from what so many people think me."

"I have already discovered that,"

she replied.

"And you do like me a little?" persisted Jock, in the boyish fashion that was one of his fortunate gifts. "Please say 'yes'—but not unless you can do it in downright earnest!"

"Certainly I like you—a great deal better than I expected to," she said, frankly. "I am glad of it; people whom one really likes do not happen

along too frequently."

"And I'm as weak as a child about wanting to be liked," cried Jock. "In spite of appearances, I am an absurdly sensitive animal, actually cursed with feelings; they have been awfully trampled on, but they will retain their vitality. I'm not complaining, you understand! I hate a chap that goes about whimpering for sympathy. And I don't pretend to be good, but I'm neither bad-hearted nor unscrupulous—in spite of what people may say."

The speech was both impulsive and artful. Jock's intuitions were almost feminine in their acuteness, and he had studied Mrs. Vincent closely during the past weeks. He appreciated the fact that she was very different from the ordinary woman of society; not only exceptionally clever, but warmhearted and imaginative under her

polished manner and playful cynicism. She was a lonely woman, too, he realized, notwithstanding her troops of friends and admirers—an unsatisfied woman, despite countless benefits that fate had lavished on her.

Her clear, honest eyes were fixed full on him as he spoke, but she did not

answer at once.

"I wish I'd held my tongue!" he cried, with a show of whimsical impatience. "A man need never expect to be believed when he tells the truth. But you might at least say what you are thinking."

"It was this: if you had said that when we first became acquainted, I should have thought you were talking

for effect."

"But you do not now?"

"Since I told you that I liked you —I am not given to suspecting my friends when they speak seriously."

"The word seems to mean so much when you say it," Jock said, far too wise to venture on the slightest approach toward sentiment. "I believe I am a better man already for knowing you—you take the place of an ideal. There is an atmosphere about you—now, don't laugh—that would make a man ashamed of his ordinary life, even if it were better and held higher aims than most men's lives can boast."

Just then a servant came through the archway, holding out a salver with a note on it.

"Herbert's writing!" Jock exclaimed. "What has happened? You permit?" He read the page hastily, and added: "Why, he can't come! Oh, by Jove, isn't that altogether too awfully awful!"

"He gives a reason, I suppose?" Mrs. Vincent asked, with a shade too much indifference to be genuine; but Jock was too busy with his own whirling thoughts to notice, quick as he was.

"Here it is." And he read aloud:

"'DEAR MR. DEBRFORTH:

"'I am more than sorry to be forced to seem an utter savage, but I find at the last moment that it will be impossible for me to get up-town in time for your luncheon. I cannot leave until our session ends, and we have some unexpected matters that must be settled. You know too well what business is not to recognize the validity of my excuse, and I am sure you can easily believe in the sincerity of my regrets.

"'I shall still be in season to have a look at the Greuze before your party breaks up, and to tell you again how very sorry I am at my

unexpected detention.

"'Very truly yours,
"'RALPH HERBERT.'"

"Perhaps he will explain why he did not telephone," was all the remark Mrs. Vincent vouchsafed, as Deer-

forth looked up from the note.

"Oh, that would be too unceremonious for Herbert," laughed Deerforth. "But he knew his note would be here in time. I met him this morning; he said he was afraid he might be late, and I told him that half-past two would be early enough. I had named two o'clock, because as a rule Mrs. Sinclair is half an hour behind time."

"You are to be envied that picture," Mrs. Vincent said, and Jock longed to offer it to her, but did not venture to

do so.

"We shall be forced to lunch without Herbert," Deerforth said, as they

entered the library.

Everybody expressed regrets, which were sincere enough—even Jock's. He had wished Herbert to see Mrs. Vincent at his table. But he was exulting over the reason which had detained Herbert. He knew that the directors had been forced to accept the terms offered by the Nemerick Company, and he was convinced that Herbert's chagrin had been so great that he wished a little time to rehimself. Perhaps he learned already that the Nemerick Company was consolidated in his, Jock's, own person. Under certain contingencies the agent who was managing the affair had received permission to reveal the fact, though, if he could, Jock wished to keep it a secret for a while.

"Some one can take Mr. Herbert's place, but no one can supply his absence," Count von Waldeck said, as the party went into the dining-room.

"Nobody can have his place even,"

returned Deerforth, as he led Mrs. Vincent to the table, adding to her: "He was to have sat next to you."

Only the butler and his satellites knew that this statement was the inspiration of the moment. It struck Jock that he could talk more freely with Mrs. Vincent if the seat at her right was vacant.

"Mr. Deerforth will have to be himself and Ralph Herbert also," said Mrs. Liscome, gathering her draperies

about her.

"What a combination!" exclaimed Blanche Sinclair.

"A very fortunate one," said Mrs.

Raynor.

"You mean for me," rejoined Jock, who suspected strongly that he did not rank among the lady's favorites.

"Oh, no; for your right-hand neigh-

bor."

"I am very well content," Mrs.

Vincent said, laughingly.

"That's such a mild, old-fashioned way of putting it," cried Mrs. Sinclair. "You might have said it was glorious, or deliriously jolly, or—"

"Oh, no; I might not," Mrs. Vincent replied, as her cousin paused for another exaggerated specimen of mod-

ern inelegance.

"She hates any approach to slang," continued Mrs. Sinclair, "though conversation without it is as common-place as an oyster without red pepper."

"I am awfully sorry that Sydney had to leave town last night," Deerforth said to her; "I wished so much

to have him here."

"That's very proper of you," she replied; "for my own part, I am resigned—I think that is as neat as Mrs. Vincent's decorous expression. But, then, I have been married two years," she added, with a smile at the young German.

"I have always thought Sydney a bold man to undertake you; still, he has managed to survive so far,"

said Mrs. Raynor.

"How about the twelve disappointed others?" asked Deerforth. "It is an

open secret that there were at least that many, and each supposed, up to the last, that he was to be the fortunate man."

"I never was engaged but four

times," Mrs. Sinclair asserted.

"Perhaps you mean, never to more than four at a time," suggested Mrs. Liscome, whereat there was a general laugh.

"Well, none of them really counted; they all knew, or they ought to have known, that I wasn't a bit in earnest."

"Not even once?" Deerforth in-

quired, playfully.

Mrs. Sinclair pretended not to hear, but as she turned and said something to von Waldeck, Helen Vincent wondered why Deerforth's careless remark should have brought a blush of annoyance to her cheeks.

The luncheon proved a great success, and Deerforth's spirits rose to fever-heat. He looked as handsome and picturesque as a Vandyke portrait, and was at his wittiest and

best.

"You must all write in my album," he said, as they rose from the table; "an original sentiment or a quotation, your favorite name and the flower you like best—nobody can have, any coffee until that is done."

They went back to the library, and Deerforth produced the volume, hand-

ing a pen to Mrs. Raynor.

"You deserve a sonnet, at least," she said; "but as I cannot evolve one, you shall have a sentiment from dear old Herrick. As for a man's name, yours is as pretty as any—Josselyn."

Mrs. Liscome wrote next, put her name where the date belonged and made various other blunders, whereat she laughed as heartily as the rest. Then Mrs. Vincent took the pen, and Blanche Sinclair followed her. Von Waldeck was looking over the shoulder of the latter as she finished, and said:

"You two ladies write so exactly alike that it would be impossible to distinguish one hand from the other. It is odd how little peculiarities of that sort will be shared by relatives,

who inherit them from some strongwilled ancestor."

"This is not a case of heredity," rejoined Mrs. Vincent. "My cousin and I had a governess with a will stronger than our forefathers' wills and ours combined. She elected to have us write this special hand, and we had to learn to do it."

"I can remember how she used to tap my poor little fingers with a ruler," said Blanche, holding up her

dainty right hand.

Von Waldeck seized the pretty fingers and appeared to be looking anxiously for traces of ill-treatment.

"Did you cry?" he asked.

"I swore at her," said Blanche.
"I had learned some dreadful oaths from an old Cuban servant. She did not understand Spanish, so I used to fling them about for consolation."

"And Blanche told mademoiselle they were little prayers for patience under persecution, which a sister of charity had taught her," added Mrs. Vincent.

"What a delightfully precocious small person she must have been!"

said Mrs. Raynor.

"Delightful at all ages," pronounced the sentimental German.

"Imaginative people always are," said Deerforth.

"No wonder, then, that you are so general a favorite!" retorted Mrs.

Sinclair, gaily.

"Ah, but my imagination is only a poor masculine affair! Compared with the feminine gift, it looks as dull as pink beside scarlet."

"What an ungrateful speech from a man whom women spoil as they do you!" cried Mrs. Liscome, as she

pulled at a refractory bow.

"Oh, everybody knows that my criticisms of your sex are like a stingy man's philanthropic sentiments—spoken for effect," said Jock.

"And Mr. Deerforth is not spoiled,"

said Mrs. Vincent.

"Helen, I hope you will write my biography!" exclaimed Blanche Sinclair. "You are the only person I ever saw who could discover in her friends virtues that nobody else dreams they possess."

"Truth and her divining-rod,"

laughed Deerforth.

"Truth didn't carry one," rejoined Blanche. "How you mix things up!"

"Justice used to own a rod, I believe," said Mrs. Raynor; "but nobody knows what has become of it."

"I hope I shall never find out," said Deerforth. "See how I am persecuted, Mrs. Vincent, just because you befriended me!"

"Perhaps Mrs. Sinclair has not forgotten the Spanish prayers; she might teach them to you," suggested Mrs. Raynor.

"He knows enough now of that sort to fill a missal," said von Waldeck.

"And supply the illuminations," re-

joined Jock.

"Your friends could do that," said Mrs. Vincent; "and, too, in something more durable than water-colors."

"In the meantime, we have neither coffee nor Herbert," observed Jock. "He must come soon now. I move that we go into the drawing-room; I wish you to say it is pretty, Mrs. Vincent. I did not forget your favorite brand of cigarettes, Mrs. Liscome; see what a thoughtful old boy I am."

"I must try one this instant," that lady replied, taking the arm of the man

who chanced to be nearest.

Blanche Sinclair had already carried off her German, and the others followed, leaving Mrs. Vincent and Deerforth a little behind. As the two reached the door, the butler informed Deerforth that he was wanted at the telephone—a very urgent message; it came from his office. Jock knew who the caller was—his agent, who had been in consultation with the directors of the Iota Mining Company. He had bidden the man telephone if his terms were agreed to, as he knew they must be; there was no other course open to Ralph Herbert and his associates.

And the matter had been settled—the victory was complete! Besides the sum to be paid, Jock would retain an interest in the Nemerick road, receiv-

ing certain shares of mining stock that any man of his acquaintance would almost have given his ears to obtain. The splendor of success blazed in Jock's eyes and rendered his smile so dazzling that Mrs. Vincent exclaimed:

"I congratulate you in advance! It is plain that you know you are called

to hear some wonderful news."

"So wonderful that it seems incredible—though I knew it must come! I am glad you are here to congratulate me; that makes it worth twice as much. I am sure that knowing you brings me good luck."

"Go to your messenger; then come and tell me as much as your business reticence will allow," Mrs. Vincent said, never happier than when hearing that a friend's cherished wishes had

been realized.

"Reticence is not one of my gifts, and, to tell the truth, my business ability is three-quarters luck," returned Jock. "I shall keep a lot of the boy in me, if I live to be a hundred."

"Really, I think you will; I fancy that is one of the reasons why you are so likable," Mrs. Vincent replied.

Her smile went to Jock's head like wine. In his excitement, it required a strong effort to keep back his secret. He longed to fall at her feet and cry out his adoration. But Mrs. Vincent reminded him of the necessity for prudence, by saying:

"And the man at the telephone!"

"If you will kindly make my excuses to the others," said Jock.

"Of course. I promised Count von Waldeck to play some Wagner; I shall

do it while you are gone."

"Then nobody would miss me, if I stayed an hour," he replied. "But I shall miss your music; will you sing for me when I come back?"

"If I don't, I will the first time you

call; won't that do as well?"

"Better—if I may call to-morrow," he said, eagerly. "Please say I may, even if it isn't one of your days for being at home."

"I am almost always at home to my

friends," she answered.

"I feel so rich, now I know that I am counted among them," cried Jock.

"Then you can enjoy your fortune at your ease," she said, with her usual sincerity; "I never go back on my word."

Deerforth's conduct on the previous Saturday had given him a high place in Mrs. Vincent's esteem; he had behaved with kindness and delicacy. He had told her that he had not allowed the bonds to go out of his possession, though he had let Mrs. Sinclair believe that he obtained the money from a person who made a business of such matters. He said he had never intended that the little lady should know—she was a mere child, after all; but her passion for speculation must be checked, or she would get into serious trouble. Jock's artfully frank account of the transaction put him in a most favorable light, whereat he was exultant.

v

As Mrs. Vincent and Deerforth were crossing the antechamber, Ralph Her-

bert made his appearance.

"Better late than never!" cried Deerforth, eagerly scanning his visitor's face for some sign of disturbance; but Herbert looked as calm and indifferent as usual. "Confound him!" thought Jock, "he would be just as cool and supercilious if he were facing ruin." Aloud he added: "I am glad you could come in, even for a little while—and you are in time for coffee. We were goodnatured enough to miss you hugely; were we not, Mrs. Vincent?"

"I believe so—now you remind me," she replied, pleasantly, as she gave

Herbert her hand.

"That is a consolation," Herbert said. "I was more than sorry to be detained, Deerforth, but there was no help."

"I hope, at least, you were repaid for the detention," Jock replied, with

another searching glance.

"Oh, I have a trick of being satisfied, whatever happens," said Herbert.

"The more ill-natured Fate is, the more I like to convince her that she has failed in her attempt to annoy me."

"And your telephone message, Mr.

Deerforth!" said Mrs. Vincent.

Jock laughed gaily, exclaiming: "See what a careless creature I am-I had forgotten. Take Mrs. Vincent into the drawing-room, Herbert. With you two there, no one will miss me. I must attend to a little matter."

"I will offer you a bit of my philosophy, if it should prove unsatisfactory," rejoined Herbert.

Somehow, in spite of his certainty and exultation, the words struck disagreeably on Deerforth's ear; but he said, lightly, as he hurried off: "I sha'n't have to borrow from your stock this time—thanks, all the same."

It was characteristic of all three that no word had passed between Helen and Herbert, or Mrs. Raynor, concerning their unexpected appearance in Deerforth's apartment on the previous Saturday. Helen had been angry at the moment, but on reflection was glad. If Herbert had been annoyed or troubled, so much the better; she had tried for weeks to rouse him out of his cool imperturbability into a revelation of regret or disapproval of her friendliness with Deerforth. But her opinion of the latter had changed so much and so suddenly that she felt impelled to say something in his favor.

"You have not a good opinion of

our host," she said, quickly.

"I am sure I never told you so," he answered.

"As if I needed to be told things!" she exclaimed. "Of course, half the stories about him are exaggerated."

"Did he tell you so?" Herbert asked,

tranquilly, as she paused.

"You are trying to vex me, but you shall not," returned she. "He would no more deign to defend himself than No doubt, he is wicked you—or I. enough—he is a man, so what could one expect?"

"I am always prepared for anything from the son of a woman," Herbert said, teasingly. "But what have you

discovered in the very agreeable Deerforth that you did not expect?"

"That he is as impulsive as a boy and exceedingly kind-hearted," cried Helen, hotly. "I wish you would not always be cynical and unpleasant when I try to be friendly."

"It is your friendship for Deerforth that is in question just now," said

Herbert, smiling.

"Indeed, he did something that makes me feel that he is a friend," she replied, earnestly. "I am not going to tell you what it was; but I wish you to believe that I have good grounds for my assertion that not only is he a kind man, but one to be trusted—of that I am convinced."

"I always bow to your convictions,"

said Herbert.

Though it was difficult for Mrs. Vincent to subdue her irritation, she went on, eagerly: "He has proved it! I came here on Saturday to ask a business favor of him and I found that he had attended to the matter in a way that only a thorough gentleman would—it was actually chivalrous."

"Master Jock is so picturesquely handsome that your epithet seems in keeping," Herbert said, placidly. "Alice and I saw you and the nix coming in and were inspired to join

you."

"Blanche isn't a nix-you have never done her justice, either. And you hoped to vex me by coming, but you did not in the least.'

"Well, then, we are good friends-

till I displease you?"

"Yes; so come in and be good, and don't look at Blanche as if she were a marmoset trying to steal chestnuts!"

"I have none that she would care to purloin, and you are certain to give her

a full share of yours."

"I am going to play Wagner for Count von Waldeck," she said, taking his arm; and they entered the drawingroom on the most amicable terms.

Jock Deerforth stood listening to the telephone message from his confidential agent. He could not have heard aright—he could not!

"I do not understand you," he

called, impatiently.

Again the words came to his ear, clear and distinct. The Iota Mining Company declined to purchase the Nemerick railway, except on terms even lower than those mentioned when transactions were first opened, weeks before.

"But they know that it has changed hands, that the stock is quoted in Helena at a tremendous advance?"

The directors had smiled at this information; they congratulated the new owners on this sudden and remarkable boom, but their ideas remained unaltered, save in one particular—possession of the road was of less moment to them than they had supposed a month previous.

More hurried questions from Jock; to each in turn a more overwhelming answer. He grew dizzy and blind; he managed to call:

"Wait a moment!"

His hands dropped to his sides; he was forced to sit down till his reeling brain cleared and his trembling legs recovered their strength; for a little he could neither think nor stand. He fought for breath, as if the air in the room had suddenly become exhausted. A torturing pain shot through his heart—he had felt it once before and been warned by his physician of possibly serious consequences. By a powerful effort of will, he forced his suffering body into submission and summoned his interlocutor.

"What was the offer?"

"A quarter—only a quarter!"

A quarter of a million — and he had spent a million and more, besides the obligations he had taken on himself. He was ruined—hopelessly ruined! Not even business credit would be left.

He thought afterward that he must have had a brief period of unconsciousness. He found himself by the door—he must get to his bedroom. To do so he must cross the antechamber and pass the drawing-room. He thought that, if any one saw him,

he could manage to make some excuse and go on. Still, it was no mat-

ter-nothing mattered now.

The portières were partly drawn; through the opening he could see his guests scattered about the room; their backs were toward the entrance. The last notes of the "Swan Song" died on the stillness; there came a gay laugh from Blanche Sinclair; then Herbert's voice, as he stood with another man quite near the doors.

"We find that a road can be built much more cheaply than we supposed; we have secured a new grant that gives us control of the land necessary. We really do not care to deal with the Nemerick Company; still, we have made an offer. Something underhand in this purchase of the road by new people? It looks that way; at least, as if the idea had been to force us to accept exorbitant terms. But, if the present owners purchased with that intention, they are terribly bitten. The sale was supposed to be unknown to us, but we did know and took measures accordingly."

Then Jock succeeded in dragging his leaden feet on—his dressing-room and bedroom were in a jutting corner of the great house, accessible either by

a side hall or the library.

He went slowly down the passage, supporting himself against the wall, entered his dressing-room and dropped heavily into a chair. He had an insane sensation of having made a long journey; the closing of the antechamber door seemed to shut him out forever from his old world.

In his jealously guarded cabinet there was a remedy his physician had given him for an attack like the present. As soon as a temporary cessation of the pain permitted him to rise, he took the medicine out, swallowed the prescribed dose and passed into his bedroom, carrying the bottle in his hand. He was forced to lie down while waiting for the drops to have their effect. Body and mind were alike so benumbed now that he could not think. He was vaguely

conscious that his guests might begin to wonder over his absence; but he did not care; or they might be gone—it seemed so long since he last heard their voices.

The sound the door made in closing echoed through his brain—the door that had shut between him and life! At the moment when his triumph seemed complete, he had been flung into this hell of defeat and fear. His broken thoughts drifted aimlessly on through blackness, until he sank into a stupor that was as much faintness as sleep. Suddenly, a new image started up in his mind. He saw Helen Vincent's face, smiling across the night; he heard her voice, clear and distinct.

He slept at last.

VI

In the drawing-room Mrs. Vincent played selections from Wagner with a skill and appreciation that sent the young German into ecstasies, which Blanche Sinclair was music-lover enough to share. At length two of the men were obliged to make their farewells, and Helen took advantage of the opportunity to rise from the piano.

"That is as much of the music of the future as is good for the present," she said, in answer to entreaties for more. "Musicians should leave off while people still wish to listen, just as women should abjure dancing while partners are still plentiful."

"Sensible, but sententious," said Herbert.

A merry skirmish of words began, in which Mrs. Raynor and Mrs. Liscome joined, the latter amusing, as usual, sometimes from the cleverness of her remarks, but as often from their glaring inappropriateness.

Meanwhile, the youthful Teuton was bemoaning in Mrs. Sinclair's ear the cruel necessity that obliged him to catch the next Washington express. She condoled with him and teased him in turn, till he was fairly bewildered and his admirable English grew hopelessly German. He tore himself away at last with hasty adieus to the others and excuses to be offered to the absent host.

Blanche went as far as the antechamber with him, more amused than touched by his genuine distress at having to say farewell. Mrs. Liscome met her at the door as she returned, whispering:

"I don't know what to do—I am coming all to bits! I wonder if there is a chambermaid and where I can go?"

"You dreadful creature, to blacken Jock's immaculate reputation by the bare suggestion!" said Blanche. "But we can go to his dressing-room—I know the way."

"If only I can hold together till we get there!" said Mrs. Liscome, joining in her friend's mirth.

Blanche led the way to the dressing-room. Mrs. Liscome retired behind a friendly screen to repair damages, and her friend aided her, while they both laughed like a pair of school-girls.

"Now you can finish setting yourself to rights," Blanche said, at last. "I will keep watch, for one of the servants might stray in before you are presentable."

"My clothes behave as if they disliked to stay on me," sighed Mrs. Liscome. "I undergo tortures, positive tortures, between accidents and the constant fear of them."

"You remind me of my pet doll," said Blanche. "She was beautiful, and I adored her and neglected all the others. But some accident happened to the poor thing's left leg—it never would stay on well afterward—and always when I was exhibiting her to some envious girl that wretched leg would come off. Finally, I made Helen believe that she broke it, and she saved up her spending money for a month, in order to buy a wonderful blue-china monkey to console me."

"How very shabby of you!"

"Oh, I told her the truth at last!"

"After she had ruined herself buying the monkey. Blanche, you haven't
a shadow of conscience!"

"Oh, yes—but it is so precious I keep it locked up; one doesn't wear one's valuable jewels every day."

"Stop making me laugh, or I shall never be dressed," said Mrs.

Liscome.

So Blanche wandered about the room, examining the bric-à-brac and thinking what a pity it was that it should be wasted on a creature of the

male gender.

She approached the cabinet and looked curiously at it. Jock had shown it to her and Sydney one day, and, when they admired it, said that its beauty was its least recommendation—it possessed a secret spring that must be touched when turning the key. He had opened it and shown them its store of little drawers and the special place for papers of small dimensions, each compartment designated by a letter of the alphabet.

Blanche sighed heavily, as if she were envious of the quaint affair. She was turning away, when she perceived that the door of the cabinet was slightly open. In his haste Jock had not swung it to heavily enough, and

the spring had failed to catch.

Blanche drew a deep breath, glanced quickly about, hesitated; then her pretty mouth settled into a curve of such determination that it made her face look hard as iron.

"I will have them," she thought.
"I will do it—then Helen need never know that he had them. Adela, are you nearly ready?" she called, and her voice was steady. At a crisis, desperation with her supplied the place of courage, coward as she was ordinarily.

"I shall be, in three minutes," came the answer. "This has been a serious

business, I assure you."

Blanche swung the door of the cabinet softly back and glanced along the compartments till she reached the one marked V. It contained a little package of letters—she knew they were there; Jock's mocking smile had told her that, when she and her husband were shown the cabinet. Helen need never know of the existence of the

letters—she would destroy them as soon as she reached home.

She pulled the package out. She must shut the door so that the spring would catch; then, as Jock never took the key off his watch-chain, the mystery of the letters' disappearance could never be solved. She had the package in her left hand; with her right she was cautiously closing the cabinet, when her left wrist was seized in a grip of steel. As she turned, Jock Deerforth's eyes looked down into hers. He was smiling, his smile made more terrible by the pallor and deep lines which the mental and physical agony of the last hour had stamped on his face.

For an instant Blanche could neither stir nor speak. She stood gazing into Jock's eyes, in helpless terror. Again desperation nerved her; she made no effort to free herself, but said, in a low,

hard voice:

"Let go my wrist!"

"What do you say, Blanche?" Mrs. Liscome called, from behind the screen.

"I am ready—just a second."

Blanche was struggling now with all her feeble might. Jock's grip on her wrist tightened; neither spoke. She was panting for breath, and the room swam before her eyes, but she would not let herself either cry out or faint, though she was sick with terror, and his fingers seemed cutting into her wrist. He was smiling still, and his mute mockery drove her tortured nerves so utterly beyond control that she struck him across the mouth, unconscious of what she was doing.

"That decides matters," said Jock,

and he laughed aloud.

Mrs. Liscome looked from behind the screen in wonder that changed to fright, as the saw the two standing there. At the same instant she saw Helen Vincent come in from the passage, and as she had no more presence of mind or courage than a rabbit, she obeyed the blind instinct which impelled her to flight. She opened the library door, ran into the farthest corner of the room and fainted comfortably away on a convenient sofa.

Again Blanche found voice enough to gasp: "Let me go! I will never give them up! Let me go! Helen shall have——"

As her voice died in a moan of pain under the merciless pressure of those cruel fingers, Helen Vincent moved forward, saying:

"Blanche! Mr. Deerforth!"

Blanche's hold on the package involuntarily relaxed. Deerforth took it from her and forced himself to look at Mrs. Vincent.

"Helen, make him give up the letters—he shall give them to you! I knew where he kept them—marked V, Helen, marked V!"

She was past every vestige of selfcontrol now and sobbed in pitiful hysterics.

"Go away, Blanche!" Mrs. Vincent said, quietly; "Mr. Deerforth will

give me the letters."

"I could hardly be expected to give booty to a person whom I found rifling my cabinet," Deerforth said, with the sad severity of a man grieved by the discovery of criminal treachery on the part of one in whom he had placed confidence.

Even in his state of mental confusion from the effects of his recent calamity, Jock's quick wits could still act, and he perceived that he could turn this present exigency to his own advantage.

Blanche could only moan, and repeat: "The letters, Helen—the letters!"

Her cousin pushed her gently aside and bade her go, saying again:

"Mr. Deerforth will give me the letters. I am sorry neither you nor he has been as frank as you promised to be."

Blanche ran away into the passage, trying to check her sobs. Mrs. Vincent held out her hand for the package.

"I know you will give me the letters,

Mr. Deerforth," she said.

"I would give you anything under heaven!" he exclaimed. "I would have given them to you weeks ago, if you had asked. Don't judge me harshly; I shall leave Mrs. Sinclair to tell you herself of her conduct. She had the package in her hand when I came out of my bedroom. I was already nearly crazy from some news that telephone message brought. You can fancy having this other business added! But she will tell you that I did not even speak but once—I just held her hand. I did not take the package till you came in."

"You look very ill, Mr. Deerforth," she said, full of wondering pity, for the man's drawn, seamed face was dismal to look on. "You have had some terrible shock. If it is a business trouble—if I could do anything—I told you I counted you among my friends. When I can assist a friend, I am only too glad; I can feel then that I am of some use in the world."

If Jock Deerforth had been his ordinary self, he would not have mistaken the meaning of her words; but he was wild with misery, half-maddened by the consciousness of defeat. It made, indeed, the bitterest drop in his cup, and its extreme of bitterness lay in the thought that the man he hated had been able to overthrow his plans. True, Herbert had been unaware of his dealings with the Nemerick Company— Or had he by some means discovered the fact and chosen this opportunity to avenge himself? thought flashed across Jock's brain and added to the disorder of his facul-Jock had been sure that Herbert was pained and enraged by his intimacy with Mrs. Vincent. A second after this new idea started up, he was equally certain that Herbert had discovered he was the purchaser of the railway and had deliberately ruined his plans.

While this reflection rushed like a flame through his mind, he was looking at Mrs. Vincent, with his stormy eyes so full of agony that her sensitive nature was roused to an extreme of sympathy that impelled her to repeat her offer, still more urgently, without the slightest thought of the meaning that vanity or passion might cause the man to attach to her words. She had not a shadow of suspicion of Deerforth's feel-

ings toward her, and in her impulsiveness she spoke as freely and earnestly as she would have done to Ralph Herbert under similar circumstances.

"Don't hesitate to tell me," she exclaimed; "a friend's troubles are my troubles. I shall not believe you trust me, unless you let me do anything possible; and there is something I can do—I am sure there is."

She cared for him—she cared! The hope he had hardly ventured to contemplate was no delusion—she knew that he loved her! This insistence on sharing his terrible burden proved that she meant him to understand her knowledge of his secret; held a permission to put it into speech.

"You are the grandest woman in the world, and the best!" he cried. "I was down in hell and you come to

help me out."

"Ready to do anything in my power," she said, gently, even now not roused to any conception of the real meaning of his exaggerated words. His business disaster must be extreme indeed; she was glad to be able to assist a human being in a strait so sore as his. "Only tell me what I can do! I am a perfectly free, independent woman; there is no one in whom it is necessary for me to confide in regard to anything whatever."

Even this endeavor to assure him that any assistance she could render would remain a secret between them had an entirely different significance to Jock's excited brain. For the moment he was not thinking of her money —she was the one woman he had ever really loved—every word she uttered was a proof that she understood and shared his feelings. She was so moved by his suffering that conventionalities had no weight with her. wished him to comprehend that she considered it her right to share his anxieties; she was encouraging him to speak.

"I think I was ready to end everything, to get out of the world; not because I was a coward, but life looked

so hopeless."

"Not while a friend was left!"

"It was the thought of you that helped me; I could not help hoping. Helen, Helen, I love you, I love you! But you know that—you——"

She stepped back, looking at him with eyes whose condemnation froze his very soul; then, without a word, she

turned to leave the room.

"You can't go—you sha'n't!" he groaned. "Don't look so—don't! I am sorry I said it. I did not mean to, but I had to speak this once. Forgive me—I will not say another word—only forgive me!"

Mrs. Vincent moved back and confronted him. The man was mad—he must be—but even in her wonder and wrath she could not forget that her aid alone probably stood between him and

ruin.

"Once more I offer you my help,"

she said; "freely, fully."

He was past reasoning, past thinking of his own interest or safety, past the possibility of comprehending his blunder.

"Don't be angry!" he pleaded. "I ought not to have spoken till I was free; till I am, I shall not again disturb you by even a look; but just this once—this once, Helen."

"And I believed you a gentleman," she said, with a cold disdain that

stung him worse than a blow.

"You made me think you cared!" he cried, in despairing rage; "you tried to make me believe it."

"Because I offered to lend you money?" she asked, with still more insufferable scorn in her eyes and voice. "I should have made the same offer to a groom in my stables, if he were in serious difficulties—provided I believed him an honest man, as I believed you to be."

Deerforth fairly bent and shrank together under the lash of her words, as a man would under the cut of a whip. A very devil of fury awoke in him, as his frenzied mind comprehended that he had lost everything now. An involuntary movement of his arm knocked off the package of letters, which he had laid on the edge of the cabinet. He stooped hurriedly

and picked it up, holding it threateningly toward her. A new devil, the meanest and cruelest that the animal instincts in man ever evolved, the desire for revenge, seized Deerforth. An infernal inspiration came, too—he held his vengeance in his hand.

"You had forgotten these," he said.
"You might have had them easily, if you had kept up your acting a little

longer."

She was not cowed, but the necessity for recovering the letters made it impossible to go without an attempt to influence him. The contempt for the man, which his self-betrayal had created in her mind, led her to think that he would be capable of selling them, if by their price he could face his pecuniary difficulties.

"What do you consider their value?" she inquired, in a matter-of-fact tone, as if opening an ordinary business transaction. She expected an outburst of wrath as a preliminary, but she believed that his needs and his common sense would induce him to give them up. "Set a price on them,

please!"

"Say that you forgive me—that I may see you again!" he cried. "Give me a chance to prove that I am not what you think. Oh, remember I am half-mad; don't judge me by to-day!"

He could not resist this last wild attempt to appease her. Women had so spoiled him that he had grown to think his power over them almost irresistible—and this woman he loved.

"How much money will buy the letters, Mr. Deerforth?" she asked, as composedly as if she had not heard

his words.

He crushed the packet in his hand, hissing out: "All your millions could not buy them! I shall give you time to consider—only send me a word, one little word."

"Since I am not rich enough to purchase, they must remain in your hands!" she answered, turn-

ing away.

"You'd better not go in this fashion!" he exclaimed.

No soldier was ever braver, physic-

ally and morally, than Helen Vincent. She did not falter.

"I shall bid you good day, Mr. Deerforth," she said.

"Are those your last words?" he demanded.

"My last," she replied.

"Then, by God, I'll use them!" he said. He tore open the packet—selected a letter and held it unfolded before her eyes. "I'll show this one first to Herbert—he knows your writing pretty well."

Helen Vincent stared in white horror at the page. She tried to speak, but no words escaped her trembling lips.

"You understand—I thought you would," sneered Deerforth. "Read it at your leisure, I am in no hurry. We might ask Herbert's opinion."

"Certainly," said Ralph Herbert's

voice.

Both turned and saw Herbert standing in the doorway of the library, calm as usual.

"Listening!" pronounced Jock.

"I came in, Mrs. Vincent," he said, "to tell you that Mrs. Raynor wishes to go. I was just in time to hear Mr. Deerforth's last words."

"You saved me the trouble of send-

ing for you," exclaimed Jock.

"Go home, Helen," Herbert said; "I will bring your letters to you."

He took her arm and drew her into the library—she had no strength to resist if she had desired. She heard the door close and lock behind her; then she heard Deerforth's sinister laugh and hurried away.

Blanche Sinclair came out of the reception-room and ran toward her. "Have you the letters?" she whispered, her face still white from fright

and hysterical emotion.

Helen shook her head.

"You let him keep them? You must be crazy!" moaned Blanche. "Do you wish us all to be the talk of the town? There is nothing Jock will stop at now. If you had humored him a little, he would have let you have them—the man is wild over you."

"Do you, too, mean to insult me?"



"No-no! But how could come away without the letters?"

"Ralph Herbert will bring me the

"Good heavens!" cried Blanche.

"What did you tell him?"

"Nothing! What was there to say? Deerforth was threatening me; he said Herbert would recognize my writing."

"Oh, Helen—he wouldn't show them to Ralph!"

"As if Ralph would look at them!" "You didn't leave those men to-

gether!" Blanche exclaimed.

"I could not well help doing so," returned Helen. "Ralph Herbert put me out of the room and locked the door."

"Oh, they will murder each other!" moaned Blanche. "What can we do?"

"Go home, woman-like, now that we have done all the mischief possible,"

retorted Mrs. Vincent.

She wished a little time before meeting Mrs. Raynor's searching eyes. She passed Blanche and entered the reception-room. Mrs. Liscome sat huddled up on a sofa, drinking ammonia and water.

"I fainted dead away—I was so frightened!" she began; but Mrs. Vincent unceremoniously cut short her explanation.

"Since you have come to, we will go home," she said.

"I had just got my things straight and was ready to go, when, the first thing I knew, there were Blanche and Jock quarreling—and where he came from, goodness knows!—and Blanche won't tell what the matter was," persisted Mrs. Liscome, "and I hate mysteries."

"Then don't invent one," said Blanche, courageous enough now that she had the support of Helen's pres-"I wanted Jock to show me some old letters of—somebody's—and he wouldn't. I tried to snatch them just for fun, and he got angry.'

"Ananias and Sapphira combined could not match her," was Mrs. Vincent's thought, as she listened to the

glibly uttered falsehood.

"Well, you seemed frightened enough!" cried Mrs. Liscome.

"I am always frightened if anybody is angry," rejoined the little lady; "Helen knows that—she gets angry with me herself, sometimes.

Mrs. Vincent was listening for some sound from behind the locked door. All she heard was the notes of the piano in the drawing-room. Mrs. Raynor was playing a fantasia of Chopin's while she waited for the rest to appear. She thought it very probable that Blanche had insisted on their sitting down to cards in spite of her message, and so decided to remain where she When the three women entered she perceived that there was something amiss, but asked no questions.

"Alice, the carriage is here," Mrs. "I have your wraps; Vincent said.

let me help you."

Mrs. Raynor expected to find the two men in the anteroom, but it was empty.

"I must say good-bye to our host,"

she remarked.

"He and Mr. Herbert are busy," Helen said, and her tone checked further inquiries on the part of her tactful sister-in-law.

It seemed to Mrs. Vincent a cowardly act to go away, but there was nothing else to do. She would not be allowed to enter the dressing-room; she would only make herself ridiculous if she She must accept the ordinary feminine rôle-retreat and leave the man who had come to her aid to bear the brunt of matters. To go was the hardest thing she had ever done in her life; but go she must.

She sat looking out of the carriage window as they drove home; she could hear Mrs. Liscome making a ludicrous jumble of her misfortune and her fright; she could hear Blanche's nervous laughter and Mrs. Raynor's efforts to change the conversation. She heard it all through the rush of one absorbing thought: in a little while she must meet Ralph Herbert's eyes and take that packet of letters from his hand; for he would bring it—she knew that.

VII

THE two men faced each other. Neither was good to look on at this moment; handsome as both faces were, they looked equally dangerous.

What are you going to do about it?" Deerforth asked, with his insufferable sneer. "You are a very prudent man, but you forget yourself for once. You made a rash promise, Mr. Herbert; how do you expect to keep it?"

For the instant Jock had positively forgotten everything save that he had lost the esteem of the woman he adored and that the man who stood there loved her-perhaps was loved in return—and that he had it in his power to torture both. He put the refolded letter with the others and laid them in the drawer, very deliberately.

"You are giving yourself unnecessary trouble," said Herbert; "you will only have to take them out again."

"Oh, you mean that you would like to read them? With all the pleasure in life, Mr. Herbert."

"I mean that you must seal that packet and give it to me."

"Are you an utter damned fool—or do you suppose I am?" cried Deerforth.

You are not, certainly," said Herbert, "though you make mistakes sometimes, in spite of your astuteness. You have made several, lately."

So, he knew into whose hands the Nemerick Company's railway had passed! And with the thought came the recollection of his own disaster to drive Jock madder than ever.

"Damn you! So you ruined me on purpose!" he exclaimed. "I'll kill

you if I swing for it!"

He struck out with all the strength of his powerful right arm, but Herbert warded off the blow and dealt one in return that stretched the other on the floor. Jock was up again in a flash, and the two clenched; and in both the instincts of the fighting animal overpowered every mental faculty. were trained athletes and well matched, though Jock's recent heart-attack put him at a disadvantage. The restraints of conventional breeding were gone gone, too, the hereditary influences of civilization—primeval nature asserted It was anthropos and his itself. brother in deadly strife. They made little noise on the thick carpet; but, if they had, the servants in the basement would have felt no surprise. accustomed to hearing promptu fencing, wrestling and sparring matches overhead when their master entertained his men friends; for that matter, they were accustomed to ladies witnessing such exhibitions.

The two men fell, locked in each other's arms, but were on their feet at the same instant. Again Jock struck out—the blow aimed below his antagonist's chest—but Herbert was prepared and avoided it; his terrible arm felled Deerforth. This time wrung from the latter a sound that was like the strangled howl of a wounded wolf. He writhed in agony, and the sight of his suffering restored Herbert's self-control. He saw a carafe of water on a table, filled a glass and brought it. At the same instant Deerforth staggered to his feet and dropped into a chair. When he could speak, he said:

"That will have to do—I'm not up

to anything more to-day."

Herbert sat down and waited in silence. Presently Deerforth rose, got a bottle of brandy from a closet, swallowed a sparing dose and sat down again.

"Now," said Herbert, "we will try to grow human once more. I don't think you are in your usual condition —it was lucky for you, for if you had been, one or the other might have had to stand trial for manslaughter."

His composure and quiet tone nerved Tock to emulate this return to the ordinary conduct of civilized men. He reached for a package of cigarettes, took one and tossed the bundle across he table, saying:

"I'd have stood my chance with satisfaction! Now let's smoke."

Herbert took a cigar-case from his pocket and lighted a Havana.

Jock watched him; then asked, sud-

denly: "Is that because you don't like cigarettes, or because you believe in imitating the Arabs?"

"Both," said Herbert. "Now

about the letters."

"You always hated me," continued Jock, "and God knows I hate you. Well, you've paid me out; but it's

my show now."

"I remarked to you once that the wheel still turned," rejoined Herbert. "I was reminded to-day of our conversation, when your agent made us acquainted with the ultimatum of the Nemerick Company."

"I was sure you knew you were ruining me," said Jock, "and that is

why you refused the offer."

"We declined because it was not to our interest to accept," Herbert replied; "I would have told you we should not, if you had asked me before you bought the road."

Deerforth struggled hard to retain his appearance of composure, but the consequences of his failure rose with such harrowing distinctness that rage and despair again overpowered him.

"I wish I could have killed you!" he snarled. "But I can hurt you worse

than a money loss could!"

He pointed toward the packet that lay in the half-open drawer. His brain was acting clearly and swiftly now; rapidly he faced the present conditions. All hope was gone; Mrs. Vincent loathed him. He must do the best thing possible for himself, commit the crowning meanness of his life, remembering how, only a few hours ago, he had dreamed of a future that held honor and happiness.

Herbert merely smiled at the last words and knocked the ashes off his

cigar

"You won't smile when you hear the rest," said Jock, in a queer, low voice, while his eyes blazed threateningly. "I have something besides that package; I have two letters that Charley Voorhies never sent and forgot to destroy."

"Don't you say a word more, Deer-

forth!"

"All hell couldn't stop me now!

You don't half know. There was a secret marriage—and Charley wasn't dead when she married Vincent!"

For a second time it seemed that the physical struggle would be renewed; then Herbert grasped the arms of his chair to hold himself still—the look on his face the most terrible that Deerforth had ever met.

"I knew that, pushed hard enough, you would stop at few crimes," Herbert said; "but I did think there was a limit to your baseness."

"Xou didn't someto

"You didn't scruple to ruin me! I think those documents are worth

my price for the railway."

Jock was trembling from head to foot. It seemed to him that he was two men at once, and one revolted at the meanness of the other. But on one side lay safety—the preservation of business credit. To reach it he must cross that gulf of treachery. If only he had put it out of his own power to take the step! Unconsciously he muttered:

"I wish I had given her the infernal

things!"

And Herbert heard him, but made no sign. Jock turned fiercely on him.

"Which shall it be?" he exclaimed:
"war, or the letters and my terms?"

"Neither," said Herbert, rising. "I shall have you expelled from the brokers' board, Mr. Deerforth. The evidence of my man Soper will be enough."

The whiteness of Jock Deerforth's face was the whiteness of death, but his eyes burned with the agony of un-

dying life.

"Sit down!" he groaned.

"There isn't anything to say," returned Herbert. "You can give me that confession of Soper's, along with the packet—and those two letters you mentioned."

For a few moments Deerforth did not stir, but Herbert saw that it was not because he hesitated; simply because he had not sufficiently recovered from that overwhelming shock to be able to stand.

"Soper!" he said, in a half-whisper.

"He meant to be faithful to his bar-

gain," Herbert said, divining the wretched man's thought. "It happened that I went home unexpectedly and found him busy with my notes and our manager's letters."

"Then you knew all along? You meant to spring this on me to-day?"

"If you had done by Soper as you promised, if there had been no threats," Herbert said, pointing to the packet, "and if certain other things I knew about had been arranged, probably I should never have told you of my discovery; certainly I should have told no one else."

Deerforth shivered under the conviction of the absolute truthfulness of the words, and in sheer pity Herbert turned his eyes away from the misery of that pallid face.

After a little, Deerforth dragged himself out of his chair and went to the cabinet. He opened one drawer, then a second, taking papers from each.

"That's for Soper," he said, slowly, laying an envelope on the table. "See for yourself."

When Herbert had looked at the paper, Deerforth held up two letters.
"Put those with the packet and seal

"Put those with the packet and seal the envelope with your seal, please," said Herbert.

Jock complied in silence, then sat down again, wearily. The pain about his heart had returned and he was weak and ill. Through his halfclosed eyelids he saw Herbert seated at a table, writing; he wondered dully what he was after now; did he mean to extort a written confession of some Jock told himself that he would sooner blow his own brains out than give that—there was not much to live for now. He was conscious of an odd, impersonal pity for Jock Deerforth, as if lock had been somebody elsean exceedingly good fellow in a thousand ways, capable of impulsive kindnesses far beyond the prigs who prided themselves on possessing moral scruples. It was easy enough for a man to be straightforward when life had given him everything, as it had Herbert. Just let him change places with

Jock and see how quickly his fine theories would die out under the strain.

"Deerforth," said Herbert; "one thing more."

"You've got all you will," returned Jock, sitting upright in his chair, his face grim with obstinate resolve.

"I am going to double our company's offer," Herbert continued. "Tell your agent to accept the sum that was set; it will be paid to-morrow. I have made out my personal cheque for the remainder; you can give me a receipt on account."

Jock stared at the slip of paper that Herbert laid on the table before him, read the amount—two hundred and fifty thousand dollars! If he accepted it, the next day would see half a million in his hands. With that sum at his immediate disposal, he might tide over the worst of his difficulties, reach at least temporary security.

"You are paying this out of your own pocket!" he said, hoarsely.

"I dare say I shall get it back, in time," rejoined Herbert.

Jock tore the cheque in fragments and flung them on the floor. "I'd be damned twice over before I would take it," he said.

He sat staring at the pieces, sick with regret, marveling at his own act; yet he would not have recalled it. A better or a worse man might have accepted; that Jock Deerforth could not, was one of the countless puzzles for which psychology has no solution.

"In a way, it would be just," Herbert said. "I might have told you weeks ago what I knew."

Jock sank back in his chair and shut his eyes; if he had run a score of miles without stopping, he could not have been more exhausted.

"Do, for God's sake, get out!" he said, fretfully.

"In a moment," Herbert replied.

Jock did not notice what he said; another spasm of pain had seized him, and while it lasted he could neither think nor stir. Herbert glanced at him, then crossed the room to the writing-table. He took out his chequebook and rapidly filled up another cheque, placing it under an ink-stand where it could not fail to catch Deer-

forth's eyes when he rose.

As he turned to the door, he looked again at the white face and limp figure in the arm-chair—a sight so pitiable that, whatever a sterner moralist might have felt, Herbert was touched to the heart. He wished, with remorseful longing, that he had gone weeks before to Deerforth and told him of his discovery. He had learned within the last hour what few, even among upright men ever learn, that Mercy should walk always a step in advance of Justice.

Jock's head moved to and fro against the cushion, in an involuntary effort to ease the whir and rush in his brain; his eyes opened again, glassy

and staring.

"Damn you!" he said. "It was an infernally fine thing you offered to do, after all."

"I wish I had done it before," was

the answer.

"And I wish I'd killed you, or you me!" gasped Jock. "Get out—do!"

Herbert went away, closing the door softly behind him. The mirror in the anteroom showed him that his coat was torn and his collar sorely crumpled, but his greatcoat would hide all that, and he would return home before going to Mrs. Vincent's.

When he could find strength to move, Deerforth had recourse to his medicine once more. As he went back to his chair, he saw the cheque; he held it in his hand when he sat down again. He tried to think, but his mind seemed a hollow space through which a whirlwind was rushing. After a little he managed to direct an envelope to Herbert, put the cheque in and sealed it.

Did he mean to keep the thing, or did he mean to send it back? He had no more idea than if he had been some one else asking the question. Was he intending to face life, or to end the miserable farce by aid of the revolver that lay in the table drawer convenient to his hand? He could not

answer that, either. Jock Deerforth seemed a separate identity which would act independent of any will of his and on whose decision he could not count.

Well, it did not matter; nothing mattered here or elsewhere—if there were any elsewhere. All he desired was to sit there and never be obliged to stir, or to think. He wished that he had given the letters to Helen Vincent—no, he did not. It was all over; the world had come to an end, whether he stayed in it or not.

The shadows deepened; the great house was very still; the limp figure settled heavily back against the cushions. Jock sank into the profound sleep of exhaustion, the envelope still grasped in the right hand that rested on the arm of the chair.

VIII

When the carriage reached Mrs. Vincent's house, Mrs. Liscome said: "I suppose you don't want me, but I want some tea, dreadfully."

"Come in, by all means," Mrs. Vin-

cent replied.

"I was coming, anyway," Blanche Sinclair said, with a somewhat poor attempt at her usual manner.

Effort as it was to talk and appear composed, Helen had no desire to gain leisure to think, until Herbert had come and gone. She had never loved him more than at this moment, yet a fierce resentment was rapidly gathering against him in her mind. He had already judged her—she was sure of that. Even if it were possible, she would offer no explanation. More, if eyes or voice betrayed censure or scorn, she would never forgive him, never exchange a word with him again.

While Mrs. Raynor was busy with her samovar and Mrs. Liscome chattered with her customary volubility and unintelligibleness, beginning sentences and leaving them unfinished in a fashion as exasperating as it was ludicrous, Helen crossed the room to arrange a vase of flowers that did not please her fastidious taste. She

had noticed the thing as we all notice trifles in moments of strong excitement and was doing her work halfmechanically, when Blanche spoke in a low tone, close at her side.

"Are you frightened, Helen?" she

asked.

"No." The voice was not encouraging, but Blanche persisted: "You don't think anything will happen?"

To you, do you mean? What

should?"

"I meant them; Jock goes crazy when he is angry, and Ralph-

"—is quite able to take care of him-Men don't fight duels nowadays self. and only draymen indulge in fisticuffs," returned Mrs. Vincent, contemptuously. "Upon my word, I think they have the advantage of gentlemen."

"You aren't angry with me, Helen?" "Oh, what would be the use!" said Mrs. Vincent, and now her voice was weary and hopeless. "I should only have to get over it; I shall go on forgiving you and loving you to the end of my life. I feel now as if I could never believe you again, but I dare say I shall; and if I pretend to, that is all you will care about."

"I do care—I do! I am wretchedwretched! I wish I had let the letters alone—but I did not stop to think. It seemed to me that, if I could only get hold of them, it would settle every-

thing."

"Well, it has," Helen replied, with

a bitter little laugh.

"You will tell Ralph?" demanded Blanche, her face paling again with fright. "If Sydney—oh, Helen, if

Sydney-

"I wouldn't open my lips to Ralph Herbert to save my life," cried Mrs. Vincent. "He told me he would bring my letters; let him do it. Mv letters!—if you had heard the tone!"

"I am so sick and faint!" moaned Blanche. "I can't talk. I was afraid to come in, but I could not bear to go home."

"For heaven's sake, don't make a scene before those two! Go up-stairs and lie down; I will send you some There, there—be a good child and don't give way, now that everything is over."

"But if Jock shouldn't give up the

letters?"

"He has Ralph Herbert to deal Helen exclaimed. "Do go with," and rest. I will come up after he has gone. I am quite capable of settling There is only Ralph now matters. we have done with the other.'

"I thought the world had come to an end," said Blanche, with a sigh of relief; "but you always know what to

do.''

"Don't you both want some tea?" Mrs. Raynor called.

"Blanche is going to lie down," said Mrs. Vincent; "we will send her up a cup."

"I have a horrible headache," added Mrs. Sinclair, ready as usual to embroider facts with fiction.

She left the room, and Helen joined

the two women.

"Blanche is so sensitive," said Mrs. Liscome, in her comfortable voice. "Just like me—the least thing completely upsets us both. Now, you don't mind, no matter what happens, Helen. I believe your nerves are made of steel."

"They were left out of my anatomy,"

Helen replied.

Mrs. Raynor glanced at the dumpy visitor with a somewhat sarcastic smile. then at her sister-in-law with an anxiety which, with her customary discretion, she refrained from putting into words.

"I shall not get over my fright in a week," continued Mrs. Liscome, in the "Do give me some calmest of tones. more tea, Alice. What a lovely gown that is, Helen!—you look magnificent in it."

She rambled on about her boy, her servants, a new book, her neuralgia, Mrs. Evert's shocking behavior with young Bascome, Mr. Liscome's fretfulness if dinner happened to be late, and any other matter that chanced to drift across her sieve-like brain. left one-half of her sentences unfinished and jumbled the others so inextricably that it would have been difficult to decide whether it was her small son who had become the victim of the married flirt, or young Bascome who had neuralgia. But neither of her companions took the trouble to listen to her monologue, so the uncertainty as to her meaning was of no consequence. Sometimes Helen said 'yes,' at random, or Mrs. Raynor said 'no,' but they remembered to glance at her occasionally; so she drank tea and wandered on, enjoying herself immensely.

It seemed to Helen that she had waited an immeasurable length Would Herbert never come? She wished the interview over and And afterward? done with. must end their familiar relations that looked so pleasant now, in spite of frequent disagreements, in which, Helen was forced to admit, it was always she who made the quarrel.

He would never trust her again, and to feel that he would not was enough of itself to seal her lips in what Mrs. Raynor termed "that obstinate Herbert silence."

At last a servant came to say that Mr. Herbert had asked to see her; he

was waiting in the library.

Helen felt a sudden shrinking from the interview, but in an instant the consciousness roused her to hot anger against herself. The color rushed back to her cheeks and her eyes grew brilliant with excitement. It was a very proud, haughty-looking woman who presently appeared before the visitor.

"Here are the letters," Herbert said, at once, holding out the packet.

"I owe you many thanks," she replied, in a voice that matched her face

"None whatever, I assure you," he

rejoined.

The powerful effort required to subdue an emotion he was determined not to betray made his tone sound cold, almost indifferent.

So, she had been correct in her belief—he had judged her already! That was enough. The sooner their ways parted now, the better. She would go to Europe and live there; if she could avoid it, she would never see him again. He was harder than a rock; having no feeling, he could not comprehend it in another. And she loved him-that was the deepest humiliation of all! She was as weak and silly as any girl in a novel. All the same, there was the truth, and she must face it. his former indifference had deepened into condemnation; perhaps he condescended to throw in a little pity. At least, she would convince him this was wasted.

"I fancy Mr. Deerforth would have given me the letters, finally, if you had not come in," she said, quickly.

Woman-like, she must needs hurt herself as much as she could—hurt

him, too, if it were possible.

"I dare say he might," returned Herbert, in a smooth, even voice. "He said so, but he did not know I heard him."

"He would not give you that satisfaction. Well, I am glad there is something decent in him; he is like the generality of his sex, though, no doubt."

"I think he is a somewhat uncommon compound of utter lack of moral perception and generous impulses," said Herbert. "But he should not be judged by his conduct to-day; he was half mad."

"Is he ruined?"

"That will depend on himself. Just one thing, Helen—excuse me for saying it-you need fear no further annoyance."

She grew scarlet, then white. stern face and matter-of-fact tone, which hid the emotion that shook his very soul, seemed to her signs of contemptuous commiseration, and drove

her nearly frantic.

"You told me a while ago that I was deteriorating; you must be charmed to have this proof of your infallible judgment," she exclaimed. "But I am tired of being judged; I will have no more of it. I determined on my way home to make your conduct in this thing the test, and here you stand looking at me as if I were too poor a creature even to be blamed severely!"

"Helen! Helen!"

"If I could explain, I would not. Nor will I endure your righteous forbearance. See here, Ralph Herbert, you and I have come to the end! You may believe what you like, but you shall not show it to my face."

"Wait, Helen-listen!"

"I will not. I mean to go away; you shall never be troubled about any of my affairs again. 'My letters!' And you bring them with the air of a prosecuting attorney making a prisoner bear evidence against himself."

He was as white as she, now, and

scarcely less agitated.

"I think I will tell you the exact truth at last," he said, with the ghost of a smile quivering across his lips. "I never expected to—I knew it would be of no use; but at least it will prove to you how mistaken you are."

"I think you will find that difficult," returned she, trying hard to control

herself.

"I love you," he said; "that is all. If I thought you could ever learn to care enough to—but a man ought to have the courage to ask for what he wants. I have been a coward because I had no hope; but I mean to ask now. Helen, will you marry me?"

"That is carrying chivalry too far," she exclaimed. "So, there is something I do not yet understand; you think I am in some danger from that man; you wish to protect me! A great many men have asked me to marry them, but this is the first time one ever did so from pity."

"I love you," he answered; "that

is my one reason."

"Those letters were to Deerforth's cousin, Charles Voorhies."

"But you did not write them."

"You heard Deerforth threaten me; he said you knew my writing—"

"I know Blanche Sinclair's also, though few persons can distinguish between the two. Of course, nothing could have induced me to look at the letters; but I knew who wrote them."

"You did not tell him!"

"No; for, in his insanity, he might have threatened us with Sydney."

Helen sat down, fairly breathless from relief.

"How good you are!" she sighed; and I was misjudging you so cruelly!"

"Never mind that. I wish an answer to my question."

"Let me go tell Blanche that we

have the letters."

"It will do her good to be anxious—only she isn't; she put her burden on you, as usual. Are you going to answer, Helen?"

"And how did you know about the

letters?"

"I know the whole story—which you don't. She was secretly married to Voorhies, just before he started for Jamaica."

"Ralph! impossible!"

"They were married all the same. You and your sister-in-law were in Europe. When poor Charles was killed by the fall from his horse, Deerforth was in Jamaica; of course, he took charge of everything, so he got those letters—"

"Married! it seems incredible!"

"Your wonderment can wait; I want an answer, Helen! I love you. Can you ever learn to care for me?"

"I learned a great while ago," she

half-whispered.

Then two very happy people stood alone in the library, and there followed the broken talk where a look finished a sentence better than words—the old story, always new.

"I did not marry George Vincent for his money," Helen said. "When all other arguments failed, my stepmother taunted me with loving you—declared that you suspected it and sneered—

that was enough!"

Then the talk drifted back to the present; they forgot that time existed, until there came an interruption—Blanche Sinclair in search of her cousin. One glance at the pair told her the truth.

"Bless us and save us!" she exclaimed. "You don't mean it!"

"I do," said Herbert, "and I hope Helen does."

"I'd like to kiss you both—I will!"

cried Blanche.

"We have borne worse inflictions," Herbert declared. Like Helen and most other persons, he could not help being fond of the conscienceless little witch.

"I was sure you would find each other out some time," she said. Then she perceived the packet on the table, and pounced on it with a scream of delight. "My letters—my letters! You heavenly Ralph! And what I have suffered, oh, no mortal can imagine!"

She ran to the hearth where a fire was burning, opened the packet and began throwing the letters one by one into the flames. When they looked toward her again, she sat in a low chair, reading a letter and weeping

softly.

"Voorhies's letter," Herbert whispered to Helen. "I believe it will be better to tell her that we know."

So they did, and since neither reproached her, she was glad to have the secret off her mind.

"I couldn't refuse," she said; "poor Charley was so desperate at the idea of leaving me! But as soon as he had gone I knew I didn't really love him. Poor Charley! And until less than a year ago Jock did not know who the woman was, and I only found out last Autumn that the letters existed and were in his hands."

The tell-tale witnesses were burned; the past seemed a dream to the illbalanced creature, who possessed after all more potentialities for good than for evil.

"I'll never have another secret," she vowed, "and I never really loved anybody but Sydney! And, oh, I fell asleep up-stairs and I had such a strange dream about Jock Deerforth! I thought we found him dead—I don't know where it was-but I wasn't afraid, somehow. And he said he was sorry he had worried us; then we were going to dance. It didn't seem oddyet I knew he was dead. Poor Jock! I hope we needn't quarrel with him for good and all. There isn't such another partner—he does hold one so delightfully! Try to forgive him by next Winter, Helen! Oh, you will be Mrs. Herbert before then! Do let me go and tell Alice—mayn't I?"



A PARADOX

EACH birthday it is just like this:
For every year I get a kiss.
This time she says she's twenty-two;
And while I know her count is true,
It would not make her heart grow colder
If I should make her out much older.

J. J. O'CONNELL.



IT WAS A BLOW

HAT'S the matter?" said the certified cheque to the 1,000-dollar bill, as he lay on the paying-teller's desk. "You seem disturbed."

"I am," said the 1,000-dollar bill; "I find I've been sitting too close to a draft."

THE OLD CAFÉ

By Arthur Macy

YOU know,
Don't you, Joe,
Those merry evenings, long ago?
You know the room, the narrow stair,
The wreaths of smoke that circled there,
The corner table where we sat
For hours in after-dinner chat,
And magnified
Our little world inside?
You know,
Don't you, Joe?

Ah, those nights divine! The simple, frugal wine, The airs on crude Italian strings, The joyous, harmless revelings, Just fit for us—or kings! At times a quaint and wickered flask Of rare Chianti; or, from the homelier cask Of modest Pilsener, a stein or so Amid the merry talk would flow; Or red Bordeaux, From vines that grew where dear Montaigne Held his domain. And you remember that dark eye, None too shy; In fact, she seemed a bit too free For you and me. You know, Don't you, Joe?

Then Pegasus I knew,
And then I read to you
My callow rhymes
So many, many times;
And something in the place
Lent them a certain grace,
Until I scarce believed them mine,
Under the magic of the wine.
But now I read them o'er
And see grave faults I had not seen before,
And wonder how
You could have listened with such placid brow,

And somehow apprehend You sank the critic in the friend. You know, Don't you, Joe?

And when we talked of books,
How learned were our looks!
And few the bards we could not quote,
From gay Catullus' lines to Milton's purer note.
Mayhap we now are wiser men,
But we knew more than all the scholars then;
And our conceit
Was grand, ineffable, complete!
We know,
Don't we, Joe?

Gone are those golden nights
Of innocent, bohemian delights,
And we are getting on;
And anon
Years sad and tremulous
May be in store for us.
But, should we ever meet
Upon some quiet street,
And you discover in an old man's eye
Some transient sparkle of the days gone by,
Then you will guess, perchance,
The meaning of the glance.
You'll know,
Won't you, Joe?



IN THE FUTURE

WIFE—How do you like the mince-pie tabloids, John?
HUSBAND—They're not bad, but you ought to taste the tabloids my mother used to make.



MR. BENTLEY—Isn't that animal too large for a guinea pig?
MR. TAKYSTER—I think it is too small. I know that I should never pay twenty-one shillings for such a little pig.



WHAT we think we know we know we think.

ESTHER KAHN

By Arthur Symons

STHER KAHN was born in one of those dark, evil-smelling streets with strange corners which lie about the docks. It was a quiet street, which seemed to lead nowhere, but to stand aside, for some not quite honest purpose of its own. The blinds of some of these houses were always drawn; shutters were nailed over some of the windows. Few people passed; there were never many children playing in the road; the women did not stand talking at their open doors. The doors opened and shut quietly; dark faces looked out from behind the windows; the Jews who lived there seemed always to be at work, bending over their tables, sewing and cutting, or else hurrying in and out with bundles of clothes under their arms, going and coming from the tailors for whom they worked. The Kahns all worked at tailoring; Esther's father and mother and grandmother, her elder brother and her two elder sisters. One did seaming, another buttonholing, another sewed on buttons; and on the poor pay they got for that seven had to live.

As a child Esther had a strange terror of the street in which she lived. She was never sure whether something dreadful had just happened there, or whether it was just going to happen. But she was always in suspense. She was tormented with the fear of knowing what went on behind those nailed shutters. She made up stories about the houses, but the stories never satisfied her. She imagined some great, vague gesture—not an incident, but a gesture—and it hung

in the air, suspended like a shadow. The gestures of people always meant more to her than their words; they seemed to have a secret meaning of their own, which the words never quite interpreted. She was always unconsciously on the watch for their

meaning. At night, after supper, the others used to sit around the table, talking eagerly. Esther would get up and draw her chair into the corner by the door, and for a time she would watch them, as if she were looking on at something, something with which she had no concern, though it interested her for its outline and movement. She saw her father's keen profile, the great, hooked nose, the black, prominent, shifty eye, the tangled black straggling over the shirtcollar; her mother, large, placid, with masses of black, straight hair coiled low over her sallow cheeks; the two sisters, sharp and voluble, never at rest for a moment; the brother with his air of insolent assurance, an self-satisfaction immense under his beautifully curved eyelids; the grandmother, with her bent and mountainous shoulders, the vivid malice of her eyes, her hundreds of wrinkles. All these people, who had so many interests in common, who thought of the same things, cared for the same things, seemed so fond of one another in an instinctive way, with so much hostility for other people not related to them, there night after night, in the same attitudes, always as eager for the events of to-day as they had been for the events of yesterday. Everything mattered immensely to them, and especially their part in things; and no one thing seemed to matter more than any other thing. Esther cared only to look on; nothing mattered to her; she had no interest in their interests; she was not sure that she cared for them more than she would care for other people; they were what she supposed real life was, and that was a thing in which she had only a disinterested curiosity.

Sometimes, when she had been watching them until they had all seemed to fade away and form again in a kind of vision more precise than the reality, she would lose sight of them altogether and sit gazing straight before her, her eyes wide open, her lips parted. Her hand would make an unconscious movement, as if she were accompanying some grave words with an appropriate gesture; and Becky would generally see it and burst into a mocking laugh and ask her whom she was mimicking.

"Don't notice her," the mother once said; "she's not a human child, she's a monkey; she's clutching out after a soul, as they do. They look like little men, but they know they're not men, and they try to be; that's

why they mimic us."

Esther was very angry; she said to herself that she would be more careful in future not to show anything that

she was feeling.

At thirteen Esther looked a woman. She was large-boned, with very small hands and feet, and her body seemed to be generally asleep, in a kind of brooding lethargy. She had her mother's hair, masses of it, but softer, with a faint natural wave in it. Her face was oval, smooth in outline, with a nose just Jewish enough for the beauty of suave curves and unemphatic outlines. The lips were thick, red, strong like a bow. The whole face seemed to await, with an infinite patience, some moulding and awakening force, which might have its way It wanted nothing, anticipated nothing; it waited. Only the

eyes put life into the mask, and the eyes were the eyes of the tribe; they had no personal meaning in what seemed to be their mystery; they were ready to fascinate innocently, to be intolerably ambiguous without intention; they were fathomless with mere sleep, the unconscious dream which is in the eyes of animals.

Esther was neither clever nor stupid; she was inert. She did as little in the house as she could, but when she had to take her share in the stitching she stitched more neatly than any of the others, though very slowly. She despised it, in her languid, smouldering way, partly because it was work and partly because it made her prick her fingers, and the skin grew hard and ragged where the point of the needle had scratched it. She liked her skin to be quite smooth, but all the glycerine she rubbed into it at night would not take out the mark of the needle. seemed to her like the badge of her slavery.

She would rather not have been a Jewess; that, too, was a kind of badge, marking her out from other people; she wished to be let alone, to have her own way without other people's help or hindrance. She had no definite consciousness of what her own wav was to be; she was only conscious, as yet, of the ways that would certainly not be hers. She would not think only of making money, like her mother, nor of being thought clever, like Becky, nor of being admired because she had good looks and dressed smartly, like All these things required an Mina. effort, and Esther was lazy. wished to be admired, and to have money, of course, and she did not wish people to think her stupid; but all this was to come to her, she knew, because of some fortunate quality in herself, as yet Then she would shake undiscovered. off everything that now clung to her, like a worn-out garment that one keeps only until one can replace it. She saw herself rolling away in a carriage, and she would never come back; and it would be like a revenge on whatever it was that kept her stifling in this



mean street; she longed to be cruelly

revenged.

As it was, her single keen pleasure was in going to the theatre with her brother or her sisters; she cared nothing for the music-halls and preferred staying at home to going with the others when they went to the Pavilion or the Foresters. But when there was a melodrama at the Standard, or at the Elephant and Castle, she would wait and struggle outside the door and up the narrow, winding stairs, for a place as near the front of the gallery as she could get. Once inside, she would never speak, but she would sit staring at the people on the stage as if they hypnotized her. She never criticized the play, as the others did; the play did not seem to matter; she lived in it without will or choice, merely because it was there and her eyes were on it.

But after it was over and they were at home again, she would become suddenly voluble as she discussed the merits of the acting. She had no hesitations, was certain that she was always in the right and became furious if any one contradicted her. She saw each part as a whole and she blamed the actors for not being consistent with themselves. She could not understand how they could make a mistake. It was so simple, there were no two ways of doing anything. To go wrong was as if you said no when you meant yes; it must be wilful.

"You ought to do it yourself, Esther," said her sisters, when they were tired of her criticisms. They meant to be satirical, but Esther said, seriously enough: "Yes, I could do it; but so could that woman if she would let herself alone. Why did she try to be

something else all the time?"

Time went slowly with Esther; but when she was seventeen she was still sewing at home and still waiting. Nothing had come to her of all that she had expected. Two of her cousins and a neighbor or two had sought to marry her; but she had refused them, contemptuously. To her sluggish instinct men seemed only good for making money—they had not come to have any definite personal meaning for her. A little man called Joel, who had talked to her passionately about love, and had cried when she refused him, seemed to her an unintelligible and ridiculous kind of animal. she dreamed of the future, there was never any one of that sort making fine speeches to her.

But, gradually, her own real purpose in life had become clear. She was to be an actress. She said nothing about it at home, but she began to go around to the managers of the small theatres in the neighborhood, asking for an engagement. After a long time a manager gave her a small part. The piece was called "The Wages of Sin," and she was to be the servant who opens the door in the first act to the man who is going to be the murderer in the second act, and then identifies him in the fourth act.

Esther went home quietly and said nothing until supper-time. Then she remarked to her mother: "I am going

on the stage."

"That's very likely," said her mother, with a sarcastic smile; "and when do you go on, pray?"

On Monday night," said Esther. "You don't mean it!" said her mother.

"Indeed I mean it," said Esther, "and I've got my part. I'm to be the servant in 'The Wages of Sin.'"

Her brother laughed. "I know," he said, "she speaks two words twice."

"You are right," said Esther; "will you come on Monday, and hear how I

say them?"

When Esther had made up her mind to do anything, they all knew that she always did it. Her father talked to her seriously. Her mother said: "You are much too lazy, Esther; you will never get on." They told her that she was taking the bread out of their mouths, and it was certain she would never put it back again. "If I get on," said Esther, "I shall pay you back exactly what I would have earned, as long as you keep me. Is that a bargain? I know I shall get on, and you won't repent of it. You had better let me do as I wish—it will pay."

They shook their heads, looked at Esther, who sat there with her lips tight shut, and a queer, hard look in her eyes—those eyes that were trying not to seem exultant; they looked at one another, shook their heads again—and consented. The old grandmother mumbled something fiercely, but as it sounded like bad words and they never knew what Old Testament language she would use, they did not ask her what she meant.

On Monday Esther made her first appearance on the stage. Her mother said to her, afterward: "I thought nothing of you, Esther; you were just like any ordinary servant." Becky asked her if she had felt nervous. shook her head; it had seemed quite natural to her, she said. She did not tell them that a great wave of triumph had swept over her as she felt the heat of the gas footlights come up into her eyes and saw the floating cluster of white faces rising out of a solid mass of indistinguishable darkness. In that instant she drew into her nostrils the breath of life.

Esther had a small part to understudy, and before long she had the chance of playing it. The manager said nothing to her, but soon afterward he told her to under-study a more important part. She never had the chance to play it, but when the next piece was put on at the theatre, she was given a part of her own. She began to make a little money and, as she had promised, she paid so much a week to her parents for keeping her. They gained by the bargain, so they did not ask her to come back to the stitching. Mrs. Kahn sometimes spoke of her daughter to the neighbors with a certain languid pride; Esther was making her way.

Esther did make her way, rapidly. One day the manager of a West End theatre came down to see her; he engaged her at once to play a small but difficult part in an ambitious kind of melodrama that he was bringing out. She did it capably, satisfied the man-

ager, was given a better part, did that well, was engaged by another manager and, in short, began to be looked upon as a promising actress. The papers praised her with moderation; some of the younger critics, who admired her type, praised her more than she deserved. She was making money; she had come to live in rooms of her own, off the Strand. At twenty-one she had done, in a measure, what she wished to do; but she was not satisfied with herself. She had always known that she could act, but how well could she act? Would she never be able to act any better than this? She had drifted into the life of the stage as naturally as if she had never known anything else; she was at home, comfortable, able to do what many others could not do. But she wished to be a great actress.

An old actor, a Jew, Nathan Quellen, who had taken a paternal interest in her and who helped her with all the good advice that he had never taken to himself, was fond of saying that the remedy was in her own hands.

"My dear Esther," he would tell her, smoothing his long gray hair down over his forehead, "you must take a lover; you must fall in love—there's no other way. You think you can act, and you have never felt anything worse than a cut finger! Why, it's an absurdity! Wait till you know the only thing worth knowing; till then you're in short frocks and a pinafore."

He cited examples, he condensed the biographies of the great actresses for He found one lesson in her benefit. them all, and he was sincere in his reading of history as he saw it. talked, argued, protested; the matter seriously troubled him. He felt he was giving Esther good advice; he wished her to be the thing she longed to be. Esther knew it and thanked him, without smiling; she sat brooding over his words—she never argued against them. She believed much of what he said; but was the remedy, as he said, in her own hands? It did not seem so.

As yet no man had spoken to her

heart. She had the sluggish blood of a really profound animal nature. She saw men calmly, as calmly as when little Joel had cried because she would not marry him. Joel still came to see her sometimes, with the same entreaty in his eyes, not daring to speak it. Other men, very different men, had made love to her in very different ways. They had seemed to be trying to drive a hard bargain, to get the better of her in a matter of business; and her native cunning had kept her easily on the better side of the bargain. She was resolved to be a business woman in the old trade of the affections; no one should buy or sell of her except at her own price, and she set the price vastly high.

Yet Quellen's words set her thinking. Was there, after all, but one way to study for the stage? All the examples pointed to it and, what was worse, she felt it might be true. She saw exactly where her acting stopped short.

She looked around her with practical eyes, not seeming to herself to be doing anything unusual or unlikely to succeed in its purpose. Deliberately she thought over all the men she knew; but who was there whom it would be possible to take seriously? She could think of only one man—Philip Haygarth.

Philip Haygarth was a man of sixand-thirty, who had been writing plays and having them acted, with only a moderate success, for nearly ten years. He was one of the accepted men, a man whose plays were treated respectfully, and he had the reputation of being much cleverer than his plays. He was short, dark, neat, very worldlylooking, with thin lips and reflective, not quite honest, eyes. His manner was cold, restrained, with a mingling of insolence and diffidence. He was a hard worker and a somewhat deliberately hard liver. He avoided society and preferred to find his relaxation among people with whom one did not need to keep up appearances, or talk sentiment, or pay afternoon calls. admired Esther Kahn as an actress, though with many reservations; and he admired her as a woman, more than he had ever admired anybody else. She appealed to all his tastes; she ended by absorbing almost the whole of those interests and those hours which he set apart for such matters.

He made love to Esther much more skilfully than any of her other lovers, and, though she saw through his plans as clearly as he wished her to see through them, she was grateful to him for a certain finesse in his manner of approach. He never mentioned the word "love," except to jest at it; he concealed even the extent to which he was really disturbed by her presence; his words spoke only of friendship and of general topics. And yet there could never be any doubt as to his meaning; his whole attitude was a patient waiting. He interested her. Here, then, was the man for her purpose. With his admirable tact, he spared her the least difficulty in making her meaning clear. He congratulated himself on a prize; she congratulated herself on the accomplishment of a duty.

Days and weeks passed, and Esther scrutinized herself with a distinct sense of disappointment. She had no moral feeling in the matter; she was her own property, it had always seemed to her, free to dispose of as she pleased. The business element in her nature persisted. This bargain, this infinitely important bargain had been concluded, with open eyes, with a full sense of responsibility, for a purpose—the purpose for which she lived! What was the result?

She could see no result. The world had in no sense changed for her, as she had been supposing it would change; a new excitement had come into her life and that was all. She wondered what it was that a woman was expected to feel under the circumstances, and why she had not felt it. How different had been her feeling when she walked across the stage for the first time! That had really been a new life, or the very beginning of life. But this was no more than

a delightful episode, hardly to be disentangled from the visit to Paris

which had accompanied it.

And then, art! She had learned nothing. No new thrill came into the words she spoke; her eyes, as they looked across the footlights, remembered nothing, had nothing new to tell.

And so she turned, with all the more interest, an interest almost impersonal, to Philip Haygarth when he talked to her about acting and the drama, when he elaborated his theories which, she was aware, occupied him more than she occupied him. was one of those creative critics who can do every man's work but their When he sat down to write his own plays, something dry and hard came into the words, the life ebbed out of those imaginary people who had been so real to him, whom he had made so real to others as he He constructed admirably and was an unerring judge of the construction of plays; and he had a sense of acting which was like the sense that a fine actor might have, if he could be himself and also some one looking on at himself. He not only knew what should be done, but exactly why it should be done. Little suspecting that he had been chosen for the purpose, though in so different a manner, he set himself to teach her art to Esther.

He made her go through the great parts with him; she was Juliet, Lady Macbeth, Cleopatra; he taught her how to speak verse and how to feel the accent of speech in verse, another kind of speech than prose speech; he trained her voice to take hold of the harmonies that lie in words themselves; and she caught them, by ear, as one born to speak many languages catches a foreign language. She went through Ibsen as she had gone through Shakespeare; and Haygarth showed her how to take hold of this very different subject-matter, so definite and so elusive. And they studied good acting-plays together, worthless plays that gave the actress opportunities to create something out of nothing. Together they saw Duse and Sarah Bernhardt; and they had seen Réjane in Paris, in crudely tragic parts; and they studied the English stage, to find out why it maintained itself at so stiff a distance from nature. She went on acting all the time, always acting with more certainty; and at last she attempted more serious parts, which she learned with Haygarth at her elbow.

She had to be taught her part as a child is taught its lesson; word by word, intonation by intonation. She read it over, not really knowing what it was about; she learned it by heart mechanically, getting the words into her memory first. Then the meaning had to be explained to her, scene by scene, and she had to say the words over until she had found the right accent. Once found, she never forgot it; she could repeat it identically at any moment; there were no variations to allow for. Until that moment she was reaching out blindly in the dark, feeling about her with uncertain fingers.

And, with her, the understanding came with the power of expression, sometimes seeming really to proceed from the sound to the sense, from the gesture inward. Show her how it should be done, and she knew why it should be done; sound the right note in her ears, arrest her at the moment when the note came right, and she understood, by a backward process, why the note should sound Her mind worked, worked under suggestion, as the hypnotists say; the idea had to come to her through the instinct, or it would

never come.

As Esther found herself, almost unconsciously, becoming what she had dreamed of becoming, what she had longed to become, and, after all, through Philip Haygarth, a more personal feeling began to grow up in her heart toward this lover who had found his way to her, not through the senses, but through the mind. A kind of domesticity had crept into their relations, and this drew Esther nearer to him. She began to feel that he belonged to her. He had never, she knew, been wholly absorbed in her, and she had delighted him by showing no jealousy, no anxiety to keep him. As long as she remained so, he felt that she had a sure hold on him. But now she began to change, to concern herself more with his doings, to assert her right to him, as she had never hitherto cared to do. He chafed a little at what seemed an unnecessary devotion.

Love, with Esther, had come slowly, taking his time on the journey; but he came to take possession. To work at her art was to please Philip Haygarth; she worked now with a double purpose. And she made surprising advances as an actress. People began to speculate: had she genius, or was this only an astonishingly developed talent, which could go so far and no farther?

For, in this finished method, which seemed so spontaneous and yet at the same time so deliberate, there seemed still to be something, some slight, essential thing, almost unaccountably lacking. What was it? Was it a fundamental lack, that could never be supplied? Or would that slight, essential thing, as her admirers prophesied, one day be supplied? They waited.

Esther was now really happy, for the first time in her life; and as she looked back over those years, in the street by the docks, when she had lived alone in the midst of her family, and since then, when she had lived alone, working, not finding the time long, nor wishing it to go more slowly, she felt a kind of surprise at herself. How could she have gone through it all? She had not even been bored. She had had a purpose, and now that she was achieving that purpose, the thing itself seemed hardly to matter. Her art kept pace with her life; she was giving up nothing in return for happiness—but she had come to prize the happiness, her love, beyond all things.

She knew that Haygarth was proud of her, that he looked upon her talent—genius, whatever it was—as partly the work of his hands. It pleased her that this should be so; it seemed to bind him more tightly to her.

In this she was mistaken, as most women are mistaken when they ask themselves what it is in them that holds their lovers. The actress interested Haygarth greatly, but the actress interested him as a problem, as something quite apart from his feelings as a man, as a lover. He had been attracted by the woman, by what was somber and unexplained in her eyes, by the sleepy grace of her movements, by the magnetism that seemed to drowse in her. He had made love to her precisely as he would have made love to an ignorant, beautiful creature who walked on in some corner of a Drury Lane melodrama. On principle, he did not like clever women. Esther, it is true, was not in the ordinary, tiresome sense; and her startling intuitions, in matters of acting, had not repelled him, as an exhibition of the capabilities of a woman, while they preoccupied him for a long time in that part of his brain which worked critically upon any interesting material. But nothing that she could do as an artiste made the least difference to his feeling about her as a woman; his pride in her was like his pride in a play that he had written finely and put aside—to be glanced at from time to time with cool satisfaction. had his own very deliberate theory of values and one value was never allowed to interfere with another. devoted, discreet amateur of woman. he appreciated women really for their own sakes, with an unflattering simplicity. And for a time Esther absorbed him almost wholly.

He had been quite content with their relations as they were before she fell seriously in love with him, and this new, profound feeling, which he had never even dreaded, somewhat disturbed him. She was adopting the attitude of a wife, and he had no ambition to play the part of a husband. The affections were always rather a strain upon him; he liked something a little less serious and a little more exciting.

Esther understood nothing that was going on in Philip Haygarth's mind, and when he began to seem colder to her, when she saw less of him, and then less, it seemed to her that she could still appeal to him by her art and still touch him by her devotion. As her warmth seemed more and more to threaten his liberty, the impulse to tug at his chain became harder to resist. His continued, unvarying interest in her acting, his patience in helping her, in working with her, kept her for some time from realizing how little was left now of the more personal feeling. It was with sharp surprise, as well as with a blinding rage, that she discovered one day, beyond possibility of mistake, that she had a rival and that Haygarth was only doling out to her the time left over from that rival.

It was an Italian, a young girl who had come over to London with an organ-grinder and who posed for sculptors—when she could get a sitting. was a girl who could barely read and write, an insignificant creature, a peasant from the Campagna, who had nothing but her good looks and the distinction of her attitudes. was beside herself with rage, jealousy, mortification; she loved and she could not pardon. There was a scene of unmeasured violence. Haygarth was cruel, almost with intention; and they parted, Esther feeling as if her life had been broken sharply in two.

She was at the last rehearsals of a new play by Haygarth, a play in which he had tried for once to be tragic in the bare, straightforward way of the things that really happen. She went through the rehearsals absent-mindedly, repeating her words, which he had taught her how to say, but scarcely attending to their meaning. Another thought was at work behind this mechanical speech, a continual throb of remembrance, going on mo-

notonously. Her mind was full of other words, which she had heard as if an inner voice were repeating them; her mind made up pictures, which seemed to pass slowly before her eyes—Haygarth and the other woman. At the last rehearsal Quellen came to her, and, ironically as she thought, complimented her on her performance. But she meant, when the night came, not to fail.

When the night came, she said to herself that she was calm, that she would be able to concentrate herself on her acting and act just as usual. But, as she stood in the wings, waiting for the moment to come, her eyes went straight to the eyes of the other woman. the Italian model, the organ-grinder's girl, who sat, smiling contentedly, in the front of a box, turning her head sometimes to speak to some one behind her, hidden by the curtain. was dressed in black, with a rose in her hair, and she was triumphantly beauti-Esther shuddered as if she had been struck; the blood rushed into her forehead and swelled and beat against Then, with an immense her eves. effort, she cleared her mind of everything but the task before her. Every nerve in her body lived with a separate life as she opened the door at the back of the stage and stood motionless under the eyes of the audience. was something in the manner of her entrance that seemed to strike the fatal note of the play. She had never been more restrained, more effortless; she seemed scarcely to be acting; only, a magnetic current seemed to have been set in motion between her and those who were watching her. They held their breaths, as if they were assisting at a real tragedy; as if, at any moment, this acting might give place to some horrible, naked passion of nature itself. The curtain rose and rose again at the end of the first act; and she stood there, bowing gravely, in what seemed a deliberate continuation, into that interval, of the sentiment of the piece. Her dresses were taken off her and put on her, for each act, as if she had been a lay-figure. Once, in the second act.

she looked up at the box; the Italian woman was smiling emptily, but Haygarth, taking no notice of her, was leaning forward with his eyes fixed on the stage. After the third act he sent to Esther's dressing-room a fervent note, begging to be allowed to see her. She had made his play, he said, and she had made herself a great actress. She crumpled the note fiercely, put it carefully into her jewel-box and refused In the last act she had to to see him. die, after the manner of the Lady of the Camellias, waiting for the lover who, in this case, never came. The pathos of her acting was almost unbearable, and, still, it seemed not like acting at The curtain went down on a great actress.

Esther went home stunned, only partly realizing what she had done, or how she had done it. She read again

the note from Haygarth, but unforgivingly—as she did the letter that came from him in the morning. As reflection returned, through all the confused suffering and excitement, to her deliberate, automatic nature, in which a great shock had brought about a kind of release, she realized that all she had wanted during most of her life had The note had at last come about. been struck—she had responded to it, as she responded to every suggestion, faultlessly; she knew that she could repeat the note, whenever she wished, now that she had once found it. There would be no variation to allow for—the actress was made at last. She might take back her lover, or never see him again—it would make no difference; it would make no difference, she repeated, over and over again, weeping uncontrollable tears.



THE LUTANIST

WAN, undulant fingers thrid the silvern strings With amorous grace and listless languishings. Her lute outmocks the music of the merle! Each small, sweet note drops, perfect as a pearl, Into soft seas of air, until again These wail like lovers, hopeless in their pain.

Now while the hills stretch purple and rose-red, And westward the sun sets, and overhead The plane-leaves shiver just perceptibly, Touched by the little wind that will not die—Now is the season to give ear to her Than whom no lutanist is perfecter.

Come, Amaryllis, play till Love's white star And quickening airs and thickening dews debar! Thou of the hair outblown and eyes that glisten, Play, for thy faithful all are here to listen. Never can poet sing his song, until Thine own weird music set the heart a-thrill!

VICTOR PLARR.

CERTAIN women are uncertain.

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A BROKER'S BILLET-DOUX

MYRTILLA, since a simple song
Can reach you at a distance,
And since in rhyme love moves along
The line of least resistance,
I leave awhile the dizzy whirl
Around the tape and ticker,
And yield my thoughts to you, dear girl,
And feel my heart beat quicker.

From all the tumult of the Street
I turn, and let my fancies
Go wandering where life is sweet
And earth a green expanse is;
A little while the picturesque—
The woods, the fields, the ocean—
Then back to prosy book and desk
And 'Change's wild commotion.

The stocks and bonds that keep me here
Are things extremely stupid;
Just now my preference, my dear,
Are stocks and bonds of Cupid;
His stocks are firm and sure to pay
Good dividends in kisses;
His bonds—a marriage bond some day—
My dearest dream of bliss is.

Good-bye! I hear a sound that means
The market's growing active,
So Fancy must forsake the scenes
More tempting and attractive.
A million is my goal, and when
The Fates see fit to send it,
I mean to marry you, and then
Ask you to help me spend it.

FELIX CARMEN.



ETIQUETTE

MRS. BLANK—Is your husband going to Mrs. Jason's funeral?
MRS. DASH—Decidedly not! She never returned my last call.

AN EXPERIMENT IN VERACITY

By Stuart F. Patterson

FOUND Mrs. Apthorp seated behind the tea-table.

"I have dropped in," I remarked, as I advanced toward her, "to announce my engagement."

Mrs. Apthorp greeted me with a smile of welcome and made a place for me beside her on the divan.

"Won't you have a cup of tea?"

she asked.

"Thank you, I will." And I took my seat somewhat abashed. I had expected to create a small sensation.

"No sugar, please." This, in reply to the waving of the sugar-tongs

inquiringly.

My hostess, for a time, was absorbed in the brew, and I took a sandwich.

"So you are engaged, are you?" she remarked, pouring the tea. "How extremely odd! Of course, I wouldn't hurt your feelings, but I must say we expected something startling and original from you."

"An elopement?" I ventured.

"Something in that line. However, I suppose things are for the best." Mrs. Apthorp sighed, resignedly.

I was distinctly embarrassed at the lack of interest in the momentous

event in my life.

"Would you care to hear the young

lady's name?" said I.

"Oh, I probably know her—her type, at least," replied Mrs. Apthorp, airily. "You see, so many of our young men are getting engaged of late." My hand, following the direction of the speaker's glance, touched the thinned locks on my temple and she smiled sweetly at her palpable hit.

I am not, it is true, as young as I was at one time. Mrs. Apthorp is well aware how true this is.

"I presume she is an angel," said

my hostess, indifferently.

"While she has most of the virtues of an angel, she has further and additional attractions," I answered, stoutly.

"Such as money and clothes, I suppose," said Mrs. Apthorp, refil-

ling my tea-cup.

"You choose to jest this afternoon, Mrs. Apthorp," I said; "I trust you do not disapprove."

"Indeed, no! I do not consider a

man married a man spoiled."

Mrs. Apthorp reclined against the cushions and regarded me quizzically. My position was decidedly uncomfortable. I blush to confess that a certain satisfaction at the sight of Mrs. Apthorp, with her fine features, pretty hair and pleasing gown, dimmed the sorrow of absence from my inamorata. I have since thought that Mrs. Apthorp suspected this.

"How Jack will laugh!" she exclaimed, indulging in that show of

emotion herself.

"Jack," I said, "is an unromantic

brute."

"I'm afraid he is, you know," she replied, soberly. "Did I ever tell you how he proposed to me? I suppose you are interested in such things, now."

"I have been before. You remem-

ber once at Fortress——"

"Of course," she interrupted; "but this is very different."

"Very, indeed," I assented.

"Well, you see, Jack had been

hanging around ever so long, since —well, since that other time."

"Fortress—" I began.

"Yes, that time," she continued, nodding assent. "But whenever we were alone he started to talk of hunters and leaders and spike-teams and that sort of thing. Of course, he took me to the horse show nearly every night when that was on, but when we arrived he'd drag me down among the stalls and talk the most scandalous family details of the prizewinners. My familiarity with the stud-book quite took my family off their feet. As time went on, I began to despair of Jack, but he came around at last. It was really awfully funny. Where do you suppose he proposed to me?"

"In a box-stall, for a venture,"

said I.

"Worse. It was at the funeral of Jack's richest aunt—you know, he has a lot of rich aunts. You see, she died and left Jack hardly anything. He had been led to expect something fine, so, of course, he was feeling very blue about the way the old lady had treated him. His debts were something awful at the time. He saw me there—it was a house funeral—and came and sat near me. He positively refused to sit with the family."

Mrs. Apthorp paused as if lost in

revery.

"A proposal required considerable diplomacy under the circumstances, I should judge," I remarked.

"Well, he was sitting very close to me, and I felt his hand clasp mine and hold it, and—well, I let him hold it; and that's all there was to it."

"But didn't he say anything?" I

exclaimed.

"Yes; he bent over and whispered, 'Let's cut all this and get out.' We couldn't, of course; but after it was over we went to look at a new road-cart Jack fancied."

"The method was direct, at least," said I, slowly. "And so you were married and lived happily ever after?"

"Practically, yes," she said. "At first, though, I was very doubtful.

You see, the whole thing—Jack and all—was so different from my idea of what would happen, so different from the time before—" Mrs. Apthorp paused.

"Which was—?" I asked.

"At Fortress Monroe," she replied,

regarding the edge of a tea-cup.

"Ah, I also recollect," said I. My heart gave an extra thump or two at the name.

"You see," she went on, "for a time, I really wondered whether it would not have been better if the person at Fortress Monroe—"

"Meaning me," I put in.

"Why, of course. It was you, wasn't it?" she assented, looking up at me as if a new and original idea had but now dawned upon her.

More irregularities of my heart!

"Thanks for the recollection," said I, putting down my empty cup. The

spoon rattled in the china.

"Won't you have another cup of tea? No? Of course, such a silly idea lasted only until I found out what a really fine fellow Jack was, under all his queer, horsey ways. I told him all about the affair, too." Mrs. Apthorp was smiling again, and my heart had, perforce, to regulate its action.

"You mentioned names, of course?"

I inquired.

"Why, yes. I told him all about you, and he was fine about it. Some men would have been a little jealous, don't you think so? But Jack felt he could trust me."

"He must have. I'll thank him for letting me call on you the next time I

see him."

Mrs. Apthorp started at this, I thought.

"It's not best to mention secrets,"

she remarked.

"And this is a secret, then?"

"Yes," she said.

"What did he say at the startling confession?" I resumed.

"Oh, he said, 'I'll be damned!' or something like that; and he dropped his cigarette on the lace counterpane. I especially remember the counterpane. Jack also burned his hand put-

ting the fire out. It was awfully pretty," she ended, sadly.

"The hand?" I queried.

"No, the counterpane, foolish!" she snapped. If Mrs. Apthorp had dared address me as "foolish" in that particular way years before—at Fortress Monroe, say—I tremble to think of the consequences. However, she had never done so, and now she was Mrs. Apthorp. We sat for a moment or so without speaking, I watching her moving the cups on the table.

"That was a glorious night at For-

tress Monroe," I said, softly.

"How large and bright the moon seemed!" she replied, taking up the reminiscent train.

"The moon always seemed larger and brighter when we were young, I suppose," said I.

"But it wasn't, you know," she

added.

"We cried for it when very young, I understand; but now, with the arclight so much improved——"

"Did I understand you to say your fiancée was very wealthy?" Mrs. Apthorp interrupted—inconsequentially, as it seemed to me.

"You did not," I said, "since you have not permitted me to describe her

at all."

"Fairly well-off, at least?"

"The wolf avoids the door," I assented.

"Pretty?"

"Rather; not very much so."

"But nice?"
"Oh, very."

"And admires you very much, I suppose?"

"She tells me so."

"Fatuous woman! And you have told her about Fortress Monroe?"

"Not as yet," I admitted. "But you intend to?"

"What would you advise?" I asked.

"Don't," said she.

"I won't," I cried.

"Because, if you do," Mrs. Apthorp added, "she'll wish to cultivate me and find out my faults, which she'll tell you, to insure you against a return of the moon-madness."

"Never!" I asserted.

The door-bell rang.

"You see, even the moon, old and very feeble, with its glimmer, may dislike to be totally put out by the greater glory."

"Mary," I said, "you know the moon of our youth always seems to us larger

and brighter than-"

"Thanks, Bob; you're very kind," Mrs. Apthorp said, as the butler parted the curtains.

I arose.

"Going? Why hurry?"

"I really must be off," I said.

"Well, au revoir."

Mrs. Apthorp regarded me fixedly, a smile gradually lighting up her eyes.

"My!" she cried after me, "won't

Jack laugh!"

My feelings were more disturbed than they had been in years as I stepped into the cab. Eternal vigilance is, indeed, the price of peace in

more than politics.

I arrived at the club in a state of mind very much depressed and sought a quiet corner to think upon the conduct of Mrs. Apthorp. Before long, I saw Jack Apthorp near by, and, longer solitude being unbearable, I went over to his table. I touched the bell as I seated myself.

"How are you, Anderson?" he said,

looking up; "how are you?"

"Very fit, thanks. I came over to announce to you my engagement."

"Good!" he cried. "Any money in

it?"

I have known Apthorp and his wife long enough to stand this sort of thing without heat.

"I mean my engagement to be married," I answered, assuming an air of stiffness.

"Oh! that so? I beg pardon." I knew he was unrepentant, but waved my hand in acceptance.

"Give me the same thing," he said

to the waiter.

"I think I'll take a little absinthe,"

I added, moodily.

Why, I thought, did he not ask the girl's name? He was generally the extreme of curiosity.

"Awful thing, this engaged business." I forbore to answer and lighted a cig-

"Well, I always like to see you free and independent folk get in trouble engaged, I mean," Apthorp went on. "Seen that new mare Morton got?"

"I'm not interested in the equine,"

I replied.

"Oh, of course not. Much safer and consoling to the mind, anyhow, to say nothing of expense." He regarded me closely over the top of his glass. "My, how Mary will laugh!"

There is such a thing as justifiable murder. I found it out at the mo-

ment, but I merely frowned.

"I suppose you know how I proposed to Mary, don't you?" he asked,

not noting my displeasure.

"No," I answered, quickly, as life took new interest for me. The same event viewed from different sides by two highly interested parties offers a mental problem worth investigation.

"Funny thing," Apthorp went on. "I never meant to do it until the moment, and even now she and I often laugh over it. You see, it was this way. It was down at Cross River—hunting crowd, house-party and all that. I had been trailing a little girl about for years before-Nice little bit of work, too, but didn't know a horse from an ice-pick. remember trying to teach her to ride, but, Lord! she couldn't sit up unless I had my arm around her. I was rather hard hit, however, and I had a fair chance to win out, if I do say it —running easy—under wraps, I may say, with the rest trailing. And money! Well, about a good twenty thousand per annum. Still, it just shows you what excitement will do. Mary came down there, and I rode about with her a great deal and piped her good style. On the last run of the meet, and a stiff one, whom should I see just ahead of me, taking fences that a great many men would hesitate at, but Mary. And what a seat! She was leading the field, but I pulled up to her just as she sailed over a five-bar, and from a nasty take-off,

I lost my head right there. 'Will you marry me?' I yelled. 'If you beat me in!' she yelled back; and we started to race. I won.' Apthorp paused to finish his whiskey. "You see, it wasn't quite as sudden as that, for I had known her for years," he added, apologetically. broke down the finest mare I ever owned beating her, too. Cost me fifteen hundred at a bargain. Short coupled, but great action; two white feet and a star."

"I beg pardon," I interrupted. My mind was wandering to the early

afternoon.

"The mare, I mean," he explained,

"Oh!" said I, and touched the

bell again.

"Expensive proposal, that. course, I never told her about the other girl," Apthorp remarked.

"That wouldn't do," I asserted.

"Might cause trouble." "Very likely," I replied.

"As you're engaged, Anderson, I'll give you a tip. Never tell them anything that's true, because if they find out one thing is true, they'll believe other things they hear, which may not be true.'

"The wisdom of the serpent!" I

remarked. "I never intend to."

"By the way," he said, "I don't believe you ever had anything to confess, did you?"

"I? Of course not; just a few

college affairs," I explained.
"Oh, those don't count. Do you know, just from curiosity, I asked Mary—hope you don't mind—if you had ever been in love with any girl. You seem such a cool, unemotional chap, always."

"And she said-?" I awaited his

answer with some eagerness.

"That you had never looked at a girl—the same girl—twice in your life, to her knowledge." And Apthorp laughed loudly. I laughed also. I had to.

"Well," he said, rising, "I must get on. I make it a point to live home whenever I can."

I had known this.

"I say, Anderson, it's common talk, you know, that Mary and I are in love with each other." As Apthorp said this he looked rather better than I had ever seen him.

"The fact," I answered, "is the

scandal of our set."

"Don't mention it, will you?" he asked, taking my hand.

"I never spread things that are

true," I replied.

"Thanks, old man." As he turned away, he suddenly remembered something. Turning to look

at me, his face aglow with amusement, he said: "Lord, Mary'll have a fit!"

I tapped the bell again.

"Bring me a little whiskey, John."
My mind was in a sufficient whirl with-

out the tipples of Gaul.

Clearly, some one of my very good friends had told me what was not the truth. And my only comfort is that I am not, never have been, and never intend to be, engaged at all. I wonder if either of them suspected the truth?

And there's always Fortress Mon-

roe.

36

THE DREAMER

THE Poet only looks Love in the eyes;
He knows the meaning of the mystic sighs,
The frenzied tears, the dream, the mad desire
That starves upon the lips it satisfies.

O Love, the music of thy vibrant hair!
Thy look is perfume on the amorous air,
Thy breath a veil of light to hide my soul,
Thy touch a dream of rapture drowned in prayer.

O dear fair head between my fevered hands! O deep, adoring eyes! The very sands In Time's faint fingers listen at your lips— Only the Dreamer ever understands!

ELSA BARKER.



THE USUAL BREAKDOWN

DOLLY—Did you enjoy your ride in the auto?

MADGE—It was nice going out, but I didn't like the walk back.



HE SHAVED NO MORE

HE—How do you like the idea of my growing a beard this Summer? SHE—Why, I should set my face against it.

A PROFANE QUEST

By James Jeffrey Roche

IT was a weary traveler, and he had journeyed far In quest of the Valhalla where the shades of Heroes are;

For he had breakfasted and dined and supped on old romance, Until his overheated mind was off its base, perchance.

He longed to see the demigods he'd read about in books; He wished to hear those ancient gods cry, "Zounds!" and eke, "Gadzooks!"

For these were oaths his eyes had seen, but ears had never heard; And he was famishing, I ween, for each romantic word.

And so the courteous Me-di-um, to whom he told his case And paid his fee, said sweetly: "Come, I'll show you to the place."

The Mejum waved his wand on high; the Mejum muttered low; And there, before the pilgrim's eye, stood good Lord Ivanhoe.

But when the mortal hailed the sprite in words of Walter Scott, "Je ne comprends pas," replied the Knight, "cette Anglo-Saxon rot!"

The Mejum sighed. "We've gone too far; let's skip some centuries—Ho, Central! give us Lochinvar, and Falstaff, if you please."

In Lowland tongue they spake the Scot; his bonnet he did doff, And, bowing low, he said, "I'm not fameeliar with golf."

And Falstaff laughed, "Young man, you've got the lingo of the stage Right pat, but if you're wise, you'll trot straight back into your cage."

In vain they summoned heroes bold, from every age and land, And swore in language quaint and old—not one could understand!

And when they crossed the sea, 'twas worse; the Yankee heroes laughed At each fantastic-worded curse, and said, "The fellow's daft!"

And loudest laughed old Putnam, he whose brimstone repertoire Embraced the whole black litany of wicked men who swear.

"Egad! thy mirth offends," I said. "Gadzooks! it irritates!" "Gadzooks—Gadshell!" said Israel; "Aw, talk United States!

"Let up on that romantic rot, and hear me curse a bit—" The rest of his remarks are not for publication fit!

MORAL—Let scribes and heroes both of blasphemy beware, But if they must rip out an oath, why, then, sir, let 'em swear!



THREE TABLECLOTHS

By Gertrude Lynch

"Une belle vue, madame."
"Une belle vue." She repeated the words of the

polite garçon, mechanically.

The hotel perched on the summit of the Sonnenberg had been wisely placed. From its balcony one could see Lucerne, the paradise of the voyager, nestling at the feet of its guardian mountains, the winding stream of the Reuss dividing it into unequal portions. Lake of the Four Cantons looked by turns translucent as sapphire opaque as turquoise; then there came a bewildering and indescribable blending of azure tints, inset with silvery sheens, like mirrors. The snowy tip of the Rigi, the frowning slope of grim Pilatus, the heights of the Bernese Oberland, melting from peak to curve and then into the far horizon, lent majesty to a scene that otherwise would have been almost too serene for perfect beauty.

It was an afternoon in early August, and already the west showed present-iments of its coming transfiguration. Down the hillsides strolled the peasants to their toy-like châlets, dotted here and there, which one passed on the drive from the Schweizerhof Quay to the vantage point described. Occasionally an echoing yodel, or the lowing of cattle, would break the silence.

Later, when the gloaming darkened into night, the search-light from Mont Pilatus would illumine the homeward way through the rustic village to the Summer colony about the lake, which, encroaching each year little by little, is driving the native Swiss to his mountain recesses, or absorbing him by the magic touch of gold until he becomes

an indistinguishable unit of the cosmopolitan throng that pours into Lucerne every season, as the melting of the glacier pours its waters into the world-famed lake.

The beauty of the scene was almost painful, like the reproach of a distant melody, like the haunting loveliness of a Madonna's face seen in some Italian palace yet undesecrated by the mob.

The woman on the balcony closed her eyes to shut it out for a moment, while the nasal accents of the waiter's voice from the inner room penetrated her consciousness.

"Oui, oui, monsieur; ze Monte Carlo een ze Vintair and zees place een ze Summaire. Eet ees not often ze people fine ze place, but when zay come ze vonce, zey come ze deux, again an' again. C'est une belle vue, n'estce pas?"

He followed his words to the balcony with a white cloth over his arm, which he proceeded to arrange on the table at her side. He smoothed it with deft touches and then, firmly catching portions of its snowy surface, made radiating creases, like an outspread fan, from centre to corner.

She had turned away from the contemplation of the landscape and relieved her overstrained sensibilities by watching the homeliness of the domestic act.

Suddenly, as she noted the waiter's supple fingers, that portion of the brain whose mysteries scientists delight to honor quickened into action. Lucerne and its setting of ice-tipped Alps, the Lake of the Four Cantons, the picturesque suburbs, were blotted

out. To her returned other pictures, the details of which had been unconsciously printed on her mental retina, and which responded now to the magic touch of memory.

She was sitting at a round table in the palm garden of one of New York's fashionable hotels. At one end of the room, shrouded by transplanted verdure, great spreading leaves and tropical blooms, a fountain played, and in the pool a procession of goldfish, like a red scarf or a stream of blood, curved to and fro in undulating motion. From a jutting balcony some Neapolitan singers in green jackets, gold-embroidered, white trousers, red sashes and caps set rakishly, with dusky faces and flashing teeth, twanged an accompaniment to the leader, who sang a boat-song of the Adriatic. globes in the swinging chandeliers were covered with rose gauze and imbedded in ferns. The waiters, softfooted, deft-handed, moved from table to table, where sat fashionably dressed women and well-groomed men, laughing, chatting and enjoying the post-theatre supper prepared by one of the most celebrated chefs in the world.

It was the usual evening scene. She had been a part of its make-up many times; but there were reasons why her other visits were lost amid unre-

membered experiences.

The man opposite her was noticeable, even in this assembly of handsome men. Tall, perfectly dressed, with figure inclined to an embonpoint that was still held in check, with a dignified air and the expression of one who is in perfect accord with his surroundings, the man was, indeed, of striking appearance, and he received glances of admiration from many feminine eyes, looking furtively to avoid their escort's espionage.

The waiter, in her mental vision, smoothed the fine texture of the damask cloth, and then, like the waiter on the balcony, catching a portion in his fingers, deftly ornamented it with tiny creases. Every detail of the scene was

as clear as the landscape at her feet; every motion of the waiter in the palm garden seemed as vivid as those of his Swiss confrère, whose action had recalled the other time and place.

She remembered how her face had hardened as she watched her vis-à-vis reading with satisfaction the items of the menu and, lost to his environment, forestalling, by his expression, the pleasure of the coming feast.

All at once the indecisions of the past few months had crystallized into a rockbound negation. There were plenty of other women who wished what he represented—the so-called "good things" of life—fine clothes, a handsome establishment, all the luxury of materialism; plenty of women who would exchange their souls. not belong among them; he had made a mistake in thinking so and she in permitting the thought. She had drifted for weeks, content with the joy of the moment. He was one of many who paid tribute to her attractions; she had studied his eligibility; she had permitted his attentions, it is true, but the time of probation had ended. She blamed herself for not having been true to her first and finer instincts, for having wasted her time and his. Well, it would be only his vanity that would be touched—a good dinner, a fine cigar, the taste of wine whose vintage was beyond reproach, and she would be forgotten. In three months he would be kneeling at another shrine.

No, it was impossible. To be bought, to be draped, appraised, framed, used as an exhibit of success, never to know the blending of soul with soul, the heart near to the heart of its mate—she could not do it; she would not.

Having given the waiter his order, his eyes followed the lines of her perfectly fitting gown, glanced admiringly at her face, flushed by the fervor of her hidden emotions and the knowledge that she was to have an unpleasant understanding with him before long. His expression was a duplicate of the one with which he had studied the menu. In his eyes she could read

clearly the thought that she did him credit.

After a moment he said, smilingly: "You didn't wear the violets I sent; didn't they suit? They were the best I could get. I paid five dollars for The man swore they were fresh, just from the country; if he's broken his word, well, he'll lose my custom, and I'll wager it will make considerable difference in his yearly receipts."

She was tempted to utter what was in her mind—all the disillusion; but it was unwise to face unpleasantness at such a time, so she said, indifferently; "I'm tired of violets; everybody wears

them, even the shop-girls."
"You're my kind," he said, admiringly, the slight to his flowers failing to penetrate the wall of self-esteem. "When a thing gets common, don't wear it. You're right! Every woman in this place is plastered with They're common as dirt. By Jove, you're always right! Next time you shall have orchids, no matter what they cost. I'll warrant the shop-girls don't wear orchids." He laughed.

She was afraid he was going to tell her the price of orchids, and warded off

the possible information.

While the supper progressed he told her how a certain speculation had turned out well. "Only cost me a champagne dinner," he confided, genially, "and I got an inside tip. That's the way—spend a little here and there, and you get it back. It's money makes the world go round, you know.

"Is it?" she inquired, absently.

"Is it?" he repeated, jestingly. He was too self-satisfied to be satirical. "Is it? As if a woman as bright as you didn't know! Everybody's got his price; I've got mine; you've got

"Yes?" she assented, with the tone of one who sits at the feet of a teacher.

He remonstrated with the waiter concerning the brown tint of the birds and sent them back to be rebroiled. Then he leaned over the table toward

"My dear girl, I'll give you a little

advice. Keep your price up; that's the secret of success in this life, for man or woman. Keep it up, and people will come to your way of thinking. The price of an article's often its only value."

She was curling a leaf of romaine over her fork.

"Personally, I adore bargains," she answered. "I loathe things which I've overpaid."

He laughed, unconscious of any

intricate meaning.

"Yes; you're feminine, all right; that's one reason I like you. You're never flaunting your opinions or your views in a fellow's face. I hate that kind of woman—woman's rights and suffrage, and all that. It's a woman's right to be pretty and sweet and well dressed; companionable, you know; that's the only right a woman ought to need."

She thought of the opinion she was soon to flaunt in his face, and was

silent.

After a little pause, time enough to excuse the change in conversation, he went on to describe the new suite of rooms he had taken at a smart apartment-house. "Like a prince's, I assure you." Then he told her of the consignment of clothes recently arrived and of his success in evad-"Not that ing the duty on them. I cared for the paltry dollars, you know, but it makes a good story, and one does like to get the best of the government."

He showed her a gem-studded pencil. "It came anonymously," he explained, "but it didn't fool me." His glance held volumes for the "She's a widowcurious to read. a little too dashing for my style. like something a little less pronounced; something refined." His eyes watched her face. "I've never given her the slightest encouragement, but she's made a play for me; everybody's seen it."

He tried to find the seeds of incipient jealousy in her expression, and succeeded-to his own satisfac-

"She can't hold a candle to you—

you need not be afraid."

"Afraid?" She looked at him with eyes wide open. He had the grace to seem ashamed and took refuge in generalities.

"Oh, you know, women are all alike—all jealous of one another. I don't care how clever they are, they

all hate their own sex."

"You have had so much experience," she answered, with a sarcasm he did not grasp; "it would be useless to

argue the point."

Smiling at what he considered an adroit compliment, he recounted some incidents of his friends. They were not worth much from the standard of humor or narrative power, but references to yachts, four-in-hands, diamond necklaces and presentations at court punctuated them as insistently as do a boy's commas his first composition.

She listened, bored, appetiteless, with only one desire—to get away, a free woman; no longer to suffer the humiliation of this man's viewpoint a man with God-given faculties, who had allowed a sky-scraping wall of materialism to grow about him and believed that the rest of the world was gazing at a horizon as narrow as his own; blinded to the fact that there were other sky-lines farther afield—summits, if not distant perspectives. Had he always been as impossible, or was this the culmination of weeks of growing revolt? However that might be, she had awakened from her stupor. The end had come. She saw clearly at last, if at times her vision had been obscured by the demands of the flesh, the insistent temptations of one who loved luxury for the leisure it afforded, for the refinements it brought. Everything commonplace and prosaic hurt her like a blow, but she had gained by experience the conclusion that one can pay too heavily for a heart's desire.

It was while they were sipping some golden chartreuse — which seemed to have gathered in its sunny globules all the perfume of the old Abbey gardens, all the pungent satire of the hooded brethren, all the inspiration of the cloisters—that a woman passed their table and, colliding with a new-comer, put out her ungloved hand to steady herself. There were some exquisite rings on the woman's fingers and, unconsciously, her eyes, attracted by their brilliancy, held for a second the expression that beauty always evoked, whatever its component elements the sea-gull's swoop, the face in the crowd, the bit of unspoiled nature, or art's handiwork.

Her vis-à-vis leaned forward. "I'll give you a handsomer one than any she's got on. We'll go to-morrow and pick it out. It'll be the finest in stock, by Jove! A man isn't engaged every day."

He had forced the situation. She turned a little pale, but spoke bravely, with lowered voice. "I appreciate the honor, but it is impossible—im-

possible."

"Oh, come, now. You know you intend to marry me. What's the use of holding off? Some women have to increase their value that way, but you don't need to."

He waited for her yielding, toying

with his coffee-spoon.

"You're the only woman I ever wanted to marry—that I've ever asked to marry me. I've had my little affairs, of course—who hasn't?—and some big ones, too; but I've never been caught. I've always fought shy at the last moment."

She gasped, half-audibly. Was it possible she had ever thought seri-

ously of marrying this man?

She bent toward him. "I'm sorry you make me speak here and now, but perhaps it is just as well. I can't marry you. I don't love you. Don't urge me; it won't do a particle of good. I'm sorry if you've misunderstood before, but you must not misunderstand any longer."

There was an expression in her face that suggested the ultimate. He spoke only once or twice after that. "I never tried so hard to please a woman—never. Most of them aren't hard to win. I have never pleased you, I know. You've always acted bored and indifferent, and kept me at arm's length. I thought it was just your way. I see now it isn't. You'd be different with a different fellow."

At parting he faced her, scarlet with humiliation, his lips trembling perceptibly, in his eyes the look of hurt vanity wounded to the core, his whole attitude that of the man who has met his first serious set-back, and who is unable to treat the situation with dignity.

His last words were: "I know I'm not a millionaire, my dear girl, but I will be some day. You wait and see. You've made a mistake."

So he passed out of her life.

It had taken her but a moment to recall that dinner, only the moment that the Swiss waiter took to place the heavy silver on the table, the thickcrusted bread, the curl of unsalted butter like a wilted maple leaf, and to smooth and crease anew the snowy cloth; only the moment that the west took to flame into a bewildering mass of color, while the Lake of the Four Cantons changed from blue to rainbow tints, while the Alps glistened with all those bewildering hues for which the language has no name. Only a moment; then memory, trickster still, threw a new scene on the canvas.

It was two years later. The time was early night, and already the street-lamps were beginning to gleam, like the gems in a necklace whose links are hid. Tall, forbidding, the gloomy façade of the Brooks House rose in the gathering shadows.

She had dismissed her cab at the corner, and now, at the crucial moment, hesitated before ascending the steps. Had she done wisely to come? Would she be able to treat this situation, as she had treated others in her life, with just the right amount of curiosity, interest and friendly sympathy?

His letter had been the impelling force. It had opened abruptly:

I do not believe you are married; you are not the sort of woman who is married early or easily. Do you remember the last dinner we had together and my words, at parting, that I would be a millionaire? Well, I am ruined—dead broke. . . . I am living at the Brooks House; you know it by reputation, of course. You can get a good dinner here for fifteen cents. Will you come and eat one with me? meet you at the entrance at six to-morrow evening, should you decide to come. I cannot call for you, as I have no dress-coat and you would be disgraced forever. I remember you were always a little particular about your admirers' coats. Don't answer this, please. I couldn't stand a conventional note of regret or sympathy; the walls are too cold and bare to permit one to read that style of correspondence philosophically, although it is prevalent here. . . . It might be an interesting experience. You must be bored by continued sunshine, and even a shadow has its mission.

There was a reckless tone in the letter, but she liked it better than anything that had come into her life since they parted.

During all the months when he had paid devoted attention to her, she had never felt the anticipatory thrill of meeting; after their parting, she remembered him with less and less distinctness. He had not impressed her deeply. The pleasure and pain of his companionship had been too exactly balanced; every agreeable memory had its reverse side, every positive point its negative resistance.

From the moment of the receipt of his letter, till they touched hands, he was scarcely out of her thoughts. What developing force, she asked again and again, had been at work? Whom was she going to meet—a stranger, or the man she had once known, who would add to his list of shortcomings that of a reckless bravado, pushed to the limits of good taste?

The fever of exploration is in every heart; for some are hid the waste places of the earth, for others the inner mazes of the human soul. Like the traveler who approaches the confines of a strange country, she knew that there was facing her the unusual and unexpected.

He was standing a little way from the door. He was pale and thin, and his clothes, made for better days, hung loosely about his wasted frame. He raised his hand to his mustache and stroked it when he saw her—how well she remembered the familiar gesture! and, through the intervening space,

she could see his hand tremble.

She had determined to steer her bark in the safe shallows of common-placeness, but her resolve suddenly melted away. She felt herself whirled along in the current of human intensity. This was not the moment for the airy persiflage of society; with the closing of the outer door she had barred the superficial and unmeaning.

He held her hand longer than convention required, while he said, slowly: "So you came! I didn't know. After I wrote I was fearful you would, and equally fearful you would not."

She answered irrelevantly: "You

have been ill-very ill."

"Oh, it isn't all illness that's pulled me down. I used to think I worked in the old days; but I didn't know what work was."

"I am sorry." Her sentence trailed limply from her lips, and she felt it ineffective; but he accepted its sym-

pathy with visible gratitude.

Her presence seemed to have acted like a tonic, and he held himself erect. There had been a swagger uprightness in the old days. This was different. This was like the attitude of a child who has at length mastered the art of walking, after many struggling preliminaries.

They sauntered slowly to the dining-hall. There was a table reserved for women. She was its only feminine occupant save a thin, pale-faced girl, who sat at the farther end and looked at her deprecatingly, the while crumbling bread.

The waiter, too, noticed in her something different from the day-by-day habitués and, desirous of showing that he, also, had seen better times, brushed an imaginary crumb from the

coarse cloth, and, catching its mesh between thumb and finger, creased it in various inexpressive radiations. His action recalled the elaborate attentions of the waiter at their last dinner together. She withdrew herself from that reminiscence to listen to his words.

"Don't think I wrote that note and asked you to come here in order to appeal to your sympathies. It looks like it, I know, for I'm pretty much of a wreck. No; I wanted you to see that I appreciate you—at last. I didn't know of any better way to tell you that than to ask you to come here and find me stripped of all the externals which I used to think were all there was in life. I can't give you a good dinner and flowers, and entertain you-Jove, how you were entertained!—with a description of my glories, but-" he paused a long time, while he buttered his bread reflectively—"I'm more of a man now than I was then—than I have ever been."

She lowered her eyes; she felt their mistiness and was afraid he might see it.

The waiter placed her soup-plate and hurried away, after spilling a part of its contents. There were lumps of meat floating aimlessly about in a watery fluid, but she was faint from hunger and dipped her spoon in it with zeal. She had anticipated the physical repulsion that might assail her, and had not eaten since breakfast.

It would have been easy to deceive him in the old times, so blinded was he to all but his narrow viewpoint, bounded on its four sides by vanities. It was not easy now, for misfortune had done the work relegated to it in the scheme of universal progress, and in this man, seemingly imbedded in materialism as a gem in its matrix, there had been an intellectual, as well as a spiritual, uplifting.

"It was the old Romans, wasn't it," she asked, lightly, "who prepared for their feasts of nightingales' tongues and peacocks' hearts by fasting?"

The hot blood coursed through his cheeks.

"Don't-you mustn't!" he exclaimed. "It isn't so long ago that the thought of a dinner here would have nauseated me. Thank heaven for my experiences! I can truthfully say it. I needed every one of them, and the blows haven't been light ones, I can assure you. After one has lived for days by means of itinerant coffeestands, one forgets to be fastidious. Try it some time when you've indigestion from canapé Lorenzo and nes-

They ate their roast beef, boiled potatoes and canned corn, amid an exchange of experiences and reminiscences.

She had found him stolid in the old days, even in his best moments. She had been conscious then of constantly drawing the veil of silence before her best thoughts, knowing that he would be unappreciative, even if he understood her. She felt now that their positions were reversed, as if he might say something she would be unable to comprehend. He had even attained the last touch of mentality, the keen sense of humor, which a king may envy

"What a cad I must have seemed to "There's you before!" he said, once. a fellow comes here occasionally, clad in broadcloth and fine linen. He actually eats the dinners, or parts of them. He reminds me of myself when

I was prosperous."

"It's a good dinner," she said, half

resentfully.

"Well, you must have been hungry." They laughed in unison. The men at the opposite table looked at them curiously; it was seldom that sound was heard.

"Tell me about him," she asked,

as she ate the rice pudding.

"Oh, he talks about his fine house, his corps of servants and his yacht. One has to go through the waters of affliction before one learns that it isn't what a man has that counts, but what he is."

There were no finger-bowls, scented with almond, decorated with floating rose-leaves. She did not deplore

their absence. She had but one regret, that the dinner was over; that she had no further excuse to linger; that she had come to the parting of their ways; for she felt, with the intuition of her sex, that he had asked her there for a purpose and the purpose had been accomplished.

He broke into her thought. "This is my last dinner here forever, I hope. To-night will be the one pleasant memory I shall take into the strenuous life I am facing. I have paid all my debts. I am a free

man."

He drew a letter from his pocket and held it up. "My opportunity! It has come in the nick of time, and I'm not a fool—now." His lips were firmly set and there were tense lines about his mouth. "A man who knows himself to the core knows that there isn't such a thing as defeat. I shall fight as long as there's breath in me, and—I shall win."

He spoke without bravado. It was the attitude of the man before battle, who recognizes only the alternatives

of victory or death.

Her tone echoed his conviction and expressed her own. "I believe you will," she said.

He placed her in the cab that she had ordered to be at the corner. She tried to say something, falteringly, stopped her. "Don't; I but he can't stand conventionalities or indifference. I've been hurt too much for that.'

"I don't have to be conventional

or indifferent," she demurred.
"No, but—" he took both her hands and held them in his-"I've appealed to your sympathies, I know. It wasn't manly. If you said anything, you might say what you would regret to-morrow, when you came to think it over. It's so easy for a woman to do that. She thinks she means all she says, and she does at the time, but she wakes up to the knowledge afterward that emotions are bad guides."

She was silent. What he said was How would she feel when the

morrow dawned, away from the magnetism of this man, whose influence seemed to be penetrating her life?

He went on: "You have told me there is no one in your heart, and I thank you for the confidence; but he may come—before I return. If he does—" his voice broke a little—"if he does, there will be one fervent prayer for your happiness, a prayer without a single selfish thought. If he doesn't—well, a man who can't make a home to offer a woman with a capital of health, hope and experience isn't much of a man, is he?"

He did not wait for an answer, but, dropping from the carriage step, was

lost to her sight.

Down the mountain slopes floated the lingering cadences of the Swiss

yodel. She had heard it in the icecave at Grindelwald, from the Mauvais Pas at Chamonix, near the falls at Martigny. It had accompanied her happiness, in these halcyon days of her honeymoon, as the *motif* of an operascore appears and disappears.

"Madame est servie," said the polite

garçon, bowing to his waist.

Through the French window stepped

a tall, erect figure.

"I have been watching you a long time from the room. Of what were you thinking so deeply, wife?"

She arose, shook her draperies a little and moved gracefully to the table, saying, with a laugh over her

shoulder:

"Of some other feasts we've had together, dear. I hope this will be as good."

Te.

A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

L-O-V-E, the alphabet;
And sighs, the punctuation;
Possessive pronouns mainly used,
In form of exclamation;
The persons, two—and quite enough,
Sufficient for all functions;
The sounds, the purest labials;
And kisses, the conjunctions.

EDWIN L. SABIN.



WELL MATCHED

WOLLY—Your vacation is rather short, isn't it?
WHIMMER—I guess it will be long enough for me. I'm rather short myself.



A GOOD INVESTMENT

BRAMBLE—What would you do if you had a million dollars?
THORNE—I'd hire a private secretary to answer fool questions.

NO TRANSIENT GUEST

By John Winwood

THE Man fingered the violets in his buttonhole and smiled and sighed; then, as he caught sight of the small figure on the other side of the hearth, he started.

"Upon my word!" he said. "I thought I was quite alone. Where did

you come from?"

"Don't pretend you didn't expect me," said the Boy. "The door was wide open; that is, it was only held by a prejudice and a habit or two—practically the same thing."

"You seem to be very sure of yourself," said the Man, "and certainly your face is a bit familiar. But I am quite sure that I have never before had the pleasure of seeing you. Would you mind telling me your name?"

The Boy tip-toed to his side and

whispered softly in his ear.

"No!" cried the Man. "Is it possible? They always said you would come some day, but I gave up expecting you long ago. May I ask what brought you here now?"

"Is she," the Boy inquired, suddenly, "the most gloriously beautiful woman you ever imagined could

exist?"

"Well-no," the Man admitted,

grudgingly.

"Has she the most exquisite grace, the keenest wit, the whitest hand, the softest hair you have ever known?"

"Well-er-not exactly," said the

Man

"Then," said the Boy, "why are you always striving to be constantly near her? Why do you dream of her by night and think of her by day?"

"Really, I-I don't know," said

the Man, stupidly.

The Boy laughed. "Well, if you

can't explain a little thing like that," he said, "how in the world do you expect me to account for my being here? You must simply take me for granted."

The Man looked at him, curiously. "Though we meet for the first time," he said, "your face is strangely familiar. Surely, I have seen some one you remind me of."

The Boy grinned. "Two Summers ago at Bar Harbor?" he inquired.

The Man blushed. "Bah! Mere

infatuation," he cried.

"Certainly," said the Boy; "we are often taken for each other; simply

a family resemblance."

The Man looked about him, doubtfully. "I don't wish to be rude," he said, "but now that you are here, may I ask, have you any idea how long you intend to stay?"

"Indefinitely," said the Boy. "I am not the transient guest others of

my family are."

"I don't know where you're going

to sleep," grumbled the Man.

"I never sleep," said the Boy. "I am troubled with insomnia."

"Then you'll probably keep me awake, too," complained the Man.

"Undoubtedly," assented the Boy,

cheerfully.

"I imagine you're going to be a bit of a nuisance," said the Man. "Now, see here; let us come to an understanding. You're not bad company for a quiet evening like this, say; but I can't have you running about my office and mixing up the books and fooling with the ticker. I haven't time for you there, understand."

The Boy laughed, wickedly. "Make me stay home, if you can," he said. "Oh, I'll be bothersome now and again; for instance, why don't you go to that little supper down-town to-night? They're expecting you; it's after twelve."

"I trust I know the courtesy due a guest," said the Man, stiffly. "I can't leave you here alone, can I?"

"Why not take me with you?" said

the Boy.

The Man winced. "Lord, no!" he

cried.

"I'm afraid I'll keep you at home a great deal," said the Boy, politely.

"I dare say," said the Man, gloomily. He paced the room thoughtfully a moment, frowning; then he turned to the Boy. "I'm going to be quite frank," he said, "and, perhaps, discourteous; but, as you yourself said, you were neither invited nor expected."

"The door was open," said the Boy.

"That has nothing to do with it," said the Man; "a mere chance. And I feel I must, I simply must ask you to go. I really haven't room for you, or time for you, and I've made no preparations for you. If you come back later, say in a year or so——"

"You really wish me to go?" asked

the Boy, doubtfully.

The Man looked at his watch. "I'm late for my engagement as it is," he said.

The Boy rose and made a step toward the door. "You'll miss me when you come back," he whispered.

"Possibly," said the Man.

"The room will be empty when I go—you know it was before I came," said the Boy.

"One can always have friends," said the Man.

"I am the only one who never becomes a bore," said the Boy, "and in the evenings when you come from the club, it'll be lonesome here by the fire, and when you are walking by the sea on a blue afternoon, say, or watching the moon rise——"

"I have done all those things without you," said the Man, undecidedly.

"Ah, you had never known me then!" said the Boy. "There will be a difference now."

He reached the threshold and looked at the Man wistfully, over his shoulder. "I can never come again, you know," he said.

"Oh, I say," said the Man, uneasily, "don't go like that. Come back just

a minute."

"It's eternity or nothing," said the Boy, brokenly. His eyes were like blue pansies in a May rain. "Good-bye," he said, hopelessly. "You must always remember you sent me away yourself."

"I'm damned if I have!" cried the Man, suddenly. He shot out a long arm to the Boy's shoulder. "Here, come back, come back, do you hear? you miserable, adorable little nuisance! Upon my word I can't let you go, after all. Come here!"

He sank into the big chair before the fire and drew the Boy closely into the curve of his arm.

"There, little chap, cheer up," he said. "Let's be cozy. What do you think of—er—her eyes, eh?"

郊际

ALMS

AS to the mosque old Time, the sultan, passed
Between the beggar months around the gate,
He in October's lap superbly cast
His golden largess and went in, elate.

THOMAS WALSH.

COM

"Humming!"



AN INCARNATION OF HELEN

By James Branch Cabell

"And memories of distant homes and wives."

THICH," murmured Townsend, "is an uncommonly good line." chewed the end of his pencil, meditatively. "From present indications," said he, "that Russian countess is cooking something on her chafing-dish It usually affects them that again. way about dawn.

He began on the next verse viciously, and came a cropper over the clash of two sibilants as the distant clamor increased. "Brutes!" said he, disapprovingly. "Sere, clear, dear—Now they've finished, 'Jamais, monsieur,' and begun crying, Mere, near— By Jove! I do smell

smoke!"

Wrapping his dressing-gown about him—he had afterward reason to thank the kindly fates that it was the green one with the white fleursde-lis, and not the wonted unspeakably disreputable bath-robe, scorched in various and unexpected places by the pipe-ashes of many years—Townsend went to the door and peered out into the empty hotel corridor. incandescent lights glimmered mildly through a gray haze that was acrid and choking to breathe; little puffs of smoke crept lazily out of the liftshaft just opposite; down-stairs all Breslau was shouting, "Feuer!" and dragging about the heavier and less valuable pieces of hotel furniture.

"By Jove!" said Townsend, and whistled disconsolately as he looked downward through the bars about the

lift-shaft.

"Do you think," spoke a voice—a deep contralto voice—"that we are in—in any danger?"

The owner of the voice was very tall, and not even the agitation of the moment prevented Townsend's observing that her eyes were on a level with his own. They were not unpleasant eyes, and a stray dream or two yet lingered under their fringed lids. The owner of the voice wore a strange garment that was fluffy and pink—pale pink, like the lining of a sea-shell—and billows of white and the ends of various blue ribbons peeped out at the neck. Townsend made a mental note of the fact that disordered hair is not necessarily unbecoming; it sometimes has the effect of an unusually heavy halo set about the face of a halfawakened angel.

"It would appear," said he, meditatively, "that, in consideration of our being on the fifth floor, with the lift-shaft drawing splendidly, and the stairs winding about it—except the two lower flights, which have just fallen in-and in consideration of the fire department's recognized incompetence to extinguish anything more formidable than a tar-barrel—yes, it would appear, I think, that we might go farther than 'dangerous' and find a less appropriate adjective to describe

the situation."

"You—you mean we can't get down?" The beautiful voice was

Townsend's silence made conclusive reply.

"Well, then," she suggested, cheerfully, after due reflection, "since we can't go down, why not go up?"

As a matter of fact, nothing could be more simple. They were on the top floor of the hotel, and beside them, in the niche corresponding to the

stairs below, was an iron ladder that led to a neatly whitewashed trap-door in the roof. Adopting her suggestion, Townsend pushed against this and found that it yielded readily; then, standing at the top of the ladder, he looked about him on a dim expanse of tiles and chimneys; yet farther off were the peaked roofs and gables of Breslau; and above him brooded a clean sky and the naked glory of the moon. He lowered his head with a sigh of relief.

"I say," he called, cheerily, "it's much nicer up here-superb view of the city, and within a minute's drop of the square! Better come up."

"Go first," said she; and subsequently Townsend held for a moment a very slender hand—a ridiculously small hand for a woman whose eyes were on a level with his own—and the two stood together on the roof of the Hôtel Continental. They had. as Townsend had affirmed, an unobstructed view of Breslau and of its square, where two toy-like engines puffed viciously and threw impotent threads of water against the burning hotel and on the heads of an excited and erratically clad throng.

Townsend looked moodily down. "That's the café," said he, sulkily, as a series of small explosions popped like pistol shots. "Oh, Lord! there goes the only decent Scotch in all

Breslau!"

"There's mamma!" she cried, excitedly; "there!" She pointed to a stout woman, who, with a purple shawl wrapped about her head, was wringing her hands as heartily as a birdcage held in one of them would "And—and permit. she's Jackie!"

"In that case," said Townsend, "I suppose it's clearly my duty to rescue the remaining member of the family. You see," he continued, bending over the trap-door and tugging at the ladder, "this thing is only about twenty feet long, but the kitchen wing of the hotel is a little less than that from the rear of the house behind it, and with this as a bridge I

think we might make it. At any rate, the roof will be done for in a half-hour, and it's worth trying." He ''You'll drew the ladder up slowly. "Think have to help," said he. you're up to carrying your end?"

"My muscles—!" she began, indignantly; then she put aside the subject with a flush, and lifted one end of the ladder with ostentatious ease. They carried it between them down the gentle slant of the roof, through a maze of ghostly chimneys and dim skylights, to the kitchen wing, which was a few feet lower than the main body of the building. send skirted a chimney and stepped lightly over the eaves, calling, "Now, then!" when a little cry, followed by a crash in the yard beneath, shook his heart into his mouth. He turned gasping, and found the girl lying safe but terrified, on the verge of the roof.

"It—it was a bucket," she sobbed, "and I stumbled over it—and it fell and—and I nearly did—and I'm so

frightened!"

Little girl! little girl!" cried he. Somehow he was holding her hand in his and his mouth was making foolish sounds and he was trembling in every "It—it was close; but—but, look here, you must pull yourself together!" he pleaded, piteously.
"I can't," she cried, hyste

'she cried, hysterically. "Oh, I'm so frightened! I can't!"

"You see," said Townsend, with careful patience, "we must go onmust, do you understand?" He waved his hand toward the east, helplessly. "Look!" said he, as a thin tongue of flame leaped through the open trapdoor and flickered wickedly for a moment against the darkness.

shuddered. She saw and come." she murmured, listlessly, and

rose to her feet.

Townsend heaved a sigh of relief, and, waving her aside from the ladder, dragged it after him to the eaves of the rear wing. As he had foreseen, it reached easily to the eaves of the house behind it, which was fortunately of the same height, and formed a passable,



though unsubstantial-looking, bridge. He regarded it disapprovingly.

"It will only bear one," said he; "and—and we'll have to crawl over

separately. Are you up to it?"

"Please go first," said she, very quietly. And Townsend, after gazing into her face for a moment, crept over gingerly, not caring to look down into the abyss beneath.

Then he spent an apparent century in silent impotence, watching a fluffy, pink figure that swayed over a bottomless space and moved forward a hair's breadth each year. He made no sound during this interval. In fact, he did not subsequently remember drawing a really satisfactory breath from the time he left the hotel roof, until he lifted a soft, faint-scented, panting bundle to the roof of the Councillor von Hellwig.

"You are," he cried, with conviction, "the bravest, the most—er—the bravest woman I ever knew!" heaved a little sigh of content. wonder," said Townsend, in his soul, "if you have any idea what a beauty you are! what a wonderful, unspeakable beauty you are! You are everything that men ever dreamed of in dreams that left them weeping for sheer happiness—and more! You are -you are you, and I have held you in my arms for a moment; and, before high heaven, to do that again I'd burn countless cities!" But aloud he only said, "We're quite safe now, you know."

She laughed, bewilderingly. suppose," said she, "the next thing is to find a trap-door."

But there were, so far as they could find, no trap-doors in the roof of the Councillor von Hellwig, or in the neighboring roofs; and, after searching three of them carefully, Townsend, apologetic but not ill-pleased, suggested the propriety of waiting till dawn to be rescued.

"You see," he pointed out, "everybody's at the fire over yonder. But we're quite safe, I should say, with the whole block of houses to walk on: and we have cheerful company, eligible central location in the heart of the city, and the superb spectacle of a big fire at exactly the proper distance. Therefore," he continued, severely, "you will instantly have the kindness to explain exactly what your motives were in wandering about the corridors of a burning hotel at four o'clock in the morning."

She sat down against a chimney and wrapped her gown about her. "I sleep very soundly," said she, meekly, "and the cries awakened me-and I suppose mamma lost her head."

'And left you,'' thought Townsend, "left you—to save a canary bird!

Good Lord!"

"And you?" she asked.

"Oh—oh, yes, me!" He awoke. sharply from wondering how she would disentangle her lashes when she looked up; it seemed impossible without assistance. "I was writing-and I thought that Russian woman had a few friends to supper—and I was looking for a rhyme when I found you," he concluded, incoherently.

She looked up. It was incredible, but the lashes disentangled quite easily. Townsend was seized with a strong desire to see her perform this interesting feat again. "Verses?" said she, considering his slippers in a new light.

"Yes," he admitted, guiltily, "of

She echoed the name. It is an unusually beautiful name when properly spoken.

"Late of Troy town," said he, in

explanation.

'Oh!" The lashes fell into their former state. It was hopeless this time; help would be required, inev-"I should think," said she. judicially, "that—that live women would be more—inspiring."

"Surely," assented Townsend. drew his gown about him and sat down. "But, you see, she is aliveto me." He dwelt lingeringly on the

last words.

"One would gather," said she, meditatively, "that you have an unrequited attachment for Helen of Troy."



A sudden idea came to Townsend, and he sighed a melancholy assent. The great eyes opened to their utmost extent. The effect was that of a ship firing a broadside at you. "Tell me all about it," said she, coaxingly.

"I have always loved her," Townsend, with gravity. "Long ago, when I was a little chap, I had a book, 'Stories of the Trojan War,' or something of the sort. And there I first of Helen—and remembered. There were pictures—outline pictures of phenomenally straight-nosed warriors, with flat draperies which demonstrated that the laws of gravity were not yet discovered; pictures of slender goddesses, who had done their hair up carefully and gone no further in their dressing; all sorts of picturesand Helen's was the most manifestly impossible of them all. But I knew-I knew of her beauty, that wonderful beauty which made men's hearts as water and drew the bearded kings to Ilium to die for her, having put away all memories of distant homes and wives; that flawless beauty which buoyed the Trojans through ten years of fighting and starvation, just with pure delight in gazing upon it day by day, and with the joy of seeing her going about their streets. For I remembered!" He sighed effectively, as he ended.

"I know," said she, softly.

"' Or ever the knightly years had gone
With the old world to the grave,
I was a king in Babylon
And you were a Christian slave.'"

"Yes; only, I was the slave, I think, and you—er—I mean, there goes the roof, and it's an uncommonly good thing you thought of the trap-door. Good thing the wind's veering, too. By Jove! look at those flames!" he cried, as the main body of the Continental toppled inward like a house of cards; "they're splashing, actually splashing, like waves over a breakwater!" He drew a deep breath and turned from the conflagration, only to catch its leaping reflection in her eyes. "I was a Trojan warrior," he resumed, simply, "one of the

many unknown men who sought and found death beside Scamander. trodden down by Achilles or Diomedes, and died knowing they fought in a bad cause, but all wrapt in a mad, wild joy, remembering the desire o' the world and her perfect loveliness. She scarce knew that I existed; but I had loved her; I had caught some scant laughing words from her in passing and I treasured them as men treasure gold; or she had spoken, perhaps—oh, day of days!—to me, in a low, courteous voice that came straight from the back of the throat and blundered deliciously over the harshness of our alien speech. I remembered—even as a boy, I remembered."

She cast back her head and laughed, merrily. "I—I think," said she, "you are the most amusing madman I ever encountered."

'No." murmured Townsend: "she never dies. She is the spirit of beauty that never dies, but ever draws men onward through the world with visions of the heart's desire. She is to each man the one woman that he may love perfectly; and to no two is . her face the same. She is sister to the old centuries; but she never dies. Her soul has known many fleshly coverings; and through countless ages I have followed her and fought for her and won her and lost her, but always loving her as all men must And some day-" His voice died into a whisper that was partly due to emotion and partly to an inability to finish the sentence satisfactorily. The logic of his verses, hastily paraphrased, when thus seemed vague.

"You hope to meet her in this

matter-of-fact day?"

"Why not?" His voice was earnest. "She always comes. Is it madness?" Townsend spread out his hands in a helpless little gesture. "I do not know. But she will come."

"You will know her?" she queried,

softly.

Townsend had reached firm ground at last. "She will be very tall," said

he, "like a young birch tree when its leaves whisper over to one another the songs of Spring in the heart of the woods. Her hair will be a miser's dream of gold; and it will hang heavily about a face that will be—will be quite indescribable, just as the dawn yonder is past the utmost preciosity of speech; but it will flush tenderly, like the first anemone of Spring peeping coyly through the black, good-smelling earth; and her eyes will be deep, shaded wells where truth lurks. When men talk to her as they cannot but talk to her, her face will flush dull red, like smouldering wood; and she will smile a little, and look out over a great fire such as that she saw on the night when Ilium was sacked and the slain bodies were soft under her feet as she fled through flaming Troy Town. And thenthen I shall know her."

His companion sighed, wearily; the woes of centuries weighed down her eyelids for a moment. "It is bad enough," she lamented, "to have lost all one's wardrobe—that blue organdie was a dream and I had never worn it—but to find one's self—in a dressing-gown—at daybreak—on a strange roof—with a strange madman—it is terrible!"

Townsend rose to his feet and waved his hand toward the east. The dawn was breaking in angry scarlet and gold that spread like fire over half the visible horizon; the burning hotel shut out the remaining half with tall flames that shouldered another monotonously one seemed dull and faded against the pure radiance of the sky. Chill daylight showed in melting patches through the clouds of black smoke It was a world of fire, overhead. transfigured by the austere magnificence of dawn and the grim splendor of the shifting, roaring conflagration; and at their feet lay the orchard of the Councillor von Hellwig, and the awakened birds piped querulously, and the sparks fell crackling among the apple-blossoms.

"Ilium!" he cried.

She inspected the scene, critically. "It does look like Ilium," she admitted. "And that," peering over the eaves into the deserted bystreet, "that looks like the milkman"

Townsend was unable to deny this, though an angry idea crossed his mind that any milkman with proper tastes and feelings would at this moment be gaping at the fire at the other end of the block, rather than prosaically measuring quarts at the side-entrance just below. But there was no help for it, when chance thus unblushingly favored the proprieties, and he clung to a water-pipe and explained the situation with a vexed mind and doubtful German.

He turned to his companion. She was regarding the burning hotel with a curiously impersonal expression.

"Now, I'd give a good deal," thought Townsend, "to know just how long you'd like that milkman to take in coming back."

H

"Do you know," said Townsend, subsequently—it was a little more than five years later—"that I didn't quite catch your name?"

She took a liberal supply of lemon juice. "The oysters," she murmured, "are delicious."

Townsend noted with approval that her gown was pink and fluffy; it had also the advantage of displaying shoulders that were incredibly white and a throat that was little short of marvelous. "I am glad," he whispered, confidentially, "that you are still wearing that faint vein about your temple; I approve of it." She raised her eyebrows slightly and selected a biscuit. "You see," said Townsend, "I was horribly late. And when Lady Pevensey said, 'Allow me,' and I saw—well, I didn't care," he concluded, lucidly.

"How curious!" she confided to a spoonful of consommé à la Julienne.

"After five years!" sighed Town-

send, happily. But he continued, with unutterable reproach, "To go without a word—that very day—

"Mamma—" she began.

Townsend recalled the canary-bird and groaned. "I sought wildly," said he; "you were flown. The propriétaire was tearing his hair—no insurance he knew nothing. I tore my hair, metaphorically; I said things. There was a row. He, too, said things: 'Figure to yourselves, messieurs! the Continental — two ladies come and go, I know not who—I am ruined, desolated, is it not? and this pig of an Englishman blusters—ah, my new carpets, just down, what horror! Ah, perfidious Albion!' -Yes," concluded Townsend, into the Duchess of Drummington's eartrumpet; "only in town for a few days."

There was an interval and an

entrée.

"And so——?"

"And so I knocked about the world in various places, hoping against hope that at last-"

"Your voice carries frightfully."

Townsend glanced toward her grace of Drummington, who, as a dining dowager of many years' experience, was engrossed in the contents of her plate. "She's as hard of hearing as a telephone-girl; and your neighbor—his neighbor is Lady Allonby. We might as well be on a desert island, desire o' the world." The term slipped out so carelessly as to appear almost accidental.

"Sir!" said she, with proper indignation; "after so short an acquaintance---"

"Centuries," he suggested, meekly. frowned—an untrustworthy frown that was tinged with laughter. "One meets so many people! Yes, it is frightfully warm, Colonel Grimshaw; they really ought to open some of the windows."

"Er—haw—hum! Didn't see you

at the Anchesters'."

"No: I am usually lucky enough to be in bed with a sick headache when Mrs. Anchester entertains. Of two evils one should choose the lesser, you know."

"Er—haw—hum!" Colonel Grimshaw retired with a reassuring air of having done his duty, once and for all.

"I never," she suggested, tentatively, "heard any more of your poem

about-about-

"Oh, I finished it; every magazine in England knows it. It's poor stuff," sighed Townsend, "but how could I write of Helen when Helen had disappeared?"

The lashes tangled. "I looked her up," confessed their owner, guiltily, "in the encyclopedia. It was very instructive—about sun-myths bronzes and the growth of the epic, you know. Of course"—there was a flush and a hiatus—"it is nonsense."

"Nonsense?" His voice sank tenderly. "Is it nonsense that for five years I have remembered a woman whose soft body I held—for a moment —in my arms? nonsense that I have fought all this time against—against the temptations every man has—that I might ask her at last—some day when she would come, as I knew she would to share a fairly clean life? nonsense that I have dreamed, waking and sleeping, of a wondrous face I knew in Ilium—in old Rome—in France when the Valois were kings—a face whose least feature is stamped on my heart unalterably, which floated before me in the dusk of the Canada woods, and beckoned through the haze of the white African sands where we potted the Boers and the Boers potted us? Nonsense? Well," sighed Townsend, vainly racking his brain for a fragment of the five-year-old rhyme, "I suppose it is!"

"The salt, please," quoth Then, after a pause: "Canada?"

"Big moose," said he.

"Africa?"

Townsend flushed guiltily. V. C.,'' he admitted.

She flashed a broadside at him. "Oh! Then you-?"

"Dear me, yes!" said Townsendto the ear-trumpet; "domesticity came in with ping-pong. Divorces are going out, you know, and divorcées aren't allowed to. Quite modish women are seen in public with their husbands nowadays."

"Heavens!" lamented her grace of Drummington. "What a disa-

greeable fad!"

Townsend ate his portion of duck abstractedly. "Do you know—I wish——"

"Yes?"

"I hardly dare ask-"

"If I were the traditional fairy," said she, meditatively, "I could not, of course, refuse a—a hero. You should have the usual three wishes."

"Two," he declared, "would be

sufficient."
"First?"

"That you tell me your name."

"I adore orange ices. Second?"

"That you let me measure your finger—any finger—say the third on the left hand."

"Absurd!" said she, decisively. "You really talk to me as if—" This non-existent state of affairs proved indescribable, the unreal condition lapsing into a pout.

"Possibly," he conceded, with caution; "the way in which a man talks to a woman—to the woman—depends largely upon the depth of——"

"The depth of his devotion?" she

queried, helpfully. "Of course!"

Townsend faced the broadside bravely. "No," said he, critically; "the depth of her dimples."

"Nonsense!" Nevertheless the dim-

ples deepened.

He bent forward; there was a little catch in his voice. "You must know that I love you," he said, simply. "I have always loved you, I think, since the moment my eyes first fell on you in that—that other pink thing. Of course, I realize the absurdity of my talking in this way to a woman whose name even I don't know; but I realize more strongly that I love you. Why, there isn't a pulse in my body that isn't throbbing and tingling and beating contentedly just from pure joy of being with you, desire o' the world! And, in time, you will love me a little,

simply because I want you to—isn't that always a woman's main reason for caring for a man?" She considered this dubious and flushed. "I won't insist," said Townsend, with a hurried, contented little laugh, "that you were formerly an Argive queen, if you don't like. That was a paraphrase of my verses, I confess—but—but Helen has always been to me the symbol of perfect loveliness, and it was not unnatural that I should identify you with her."

"Thank you, sir," said she, de-

murely.

"I half-believe it is true even now; and if not—well, Helen was well enough in her day, desire o' the world, but I have seen you and loved you, and Helen is forgot. It isn't exactly the orthodox way of falling in love," he added, with cheerful candor; "but—but it's very real to me."

"You—you couldn't have fallen in love, really," said she, unconvincingly.

"It was not in the least difficult," he protested.

"You don't even know my name."

Townsend laughed easily. "I know what it's going to be," said he, with conviction.

"No!" Common courtesy naturally demanded that this should not be spoken with undue harshness. "Never, under any conceivable circumstances!" Courtesy, perhaps, prompted the little sigh, which Townsend noted with approval.

"And after dinner—in an hour?"

"In the Winter Garden," she conceded; "I—I might decline you, with thanks."

"Rejection not implying any lack of merit," quoth Townsend, grimly. "Thanks; I'm accustomed to it."

Lady Pevensey was gathering eyes around the table, and her guests rose with the usual outburst of conversation and swishing of dresses and dropping of handkerchiefs and fans. The Duchess of Drummington bore down upon them, a determined and generously proportioned figure in black silk.

"Really," said she, aggressively, "I never saw two people more engrossed.

My dear Mrs. Barry-Smith, you've been so taken up with Bob Townsend, I haven't had a chance to ask after your dear husband, or get in a word. It's scandalous! Why isn't he here?"

"Dear Lady Drummington-" said

she.

"In fact," broke in Townsend, smiling, "Mrs. Barry-Smith and I have been discussing very—very interesting subjects." His manner, was perfection; but, as he stood aside to let them pass, he gripped the back of his chair somewhat more firmly than was absolutely necessary.

III

"And so," said Townsend, in his soul, as the men redistributed themselves, "she's married—married while you were pottering with big moose and battles and such trifles—oh, you ass! And to a man named Barry-Smith-Manchester and cotton goods, most likely—and—and Jimmy Travis is telling a funny story—laugh, you ass! No, I won't laugh—it's disgusting. Why isn't he at home—with a wife and carpet slippers—instead of here, grinning like a fool over some blatant indecency? He ought to marry; every young man ought to marry. Oh, you futile, abject, burbling ass! Why aren't you married—married years ago -with a home of your own and a brougham and—and bills from the kindergarten every quarter? Oh, you ass!" He snapped the stem of his glass carefully, and scowled with morose disapproval at the unconscious Mr. Travis.

He found her subsequently, inspecting a bulky folio with remarkable interest. There was a lamp with a red shade that cast a glow over her, such as one sometimes sees reflected from a great fire. The people about them were chattering idiotically, and something inside his throat prevented his breathing properly, and he was very miserable.

"Mrs. Barry-Smith," said he, gravely, "if you have any grace in your heart for a very presumptuous, blundering, unhappy man, I pray you to forgive and forget all that I have said to you. I spoke, as I thought, to a free woman, who had the right to listen to my wild talk, even though she might elect to laugh at it. And now—now I hardly dare ask forgiveness."

Mrs. Barry-Smith inspected a view of the Matterhorn with careful deliberation. "Forgiveness?" said she,

doubtfully.

"Indeed," said Townsend, "I do not deserve it." He smiled resolutely. "I had always known that somewhere, somehow, you would come into my life again. It has been my dream all these five years; but I dream carelessly. My visions had not included this—this obstacle."

She made wide eyes at him. "What?"

said she.

"Your husband," he suggested,

delicately.

The eyes flashed. There was an interval. A view of Monaco, to all appearances, awoke pleasing recollections. "I confess," said Mrs. Barry-Smith, "that—for the time—I had quite forgotten him."

"H'm!" said Townsend.

"I suppose," she hazarded, softly, "you think me very—very horrid?" She accompanied this query with a broadside that rendered such a supposition unthinkable.

"I think you—" His speech was hushed and breathless, and ended in a little click of the teeth. "Don't let's go into details," he pleaded,

desperately.

Mrs. Barry-Smith descended to a truism. "It is usually unwise," said she, with the air of an authority. Then, addressing the façade of Notre Dame, "He is much—much older than I."

"I should prefer that. Of course it's none of my business," said Town-

send, hastily.

"You—you see, you came and went so suddenly that—of course I never thought to see you again—not that I ever thought of it, of course." Her candor would have been cruel had it not been suspiciously earnest. "And—and he was very pressing."

"He would be," assented Townsend, after consideration, "naturally."

"And he was a great friend of my father's, and I liked him."

"So you married him and lived happily ever afterward. Quite so!"

She smiled, inscrutably, a sphinx in Dresden china. "And yet," she murmured, plaintively, "I should like to know what you think of me."

"Now, in any other woman," thought Townsend, "that would have been vulgar." He set his teeth and faced the imminent danger bravely. "Prefacing my remarks," said he, in a level voice, "with the announcement that I pray God I may never see you after to-night, I think you the most adorable creature He ever made. What matter now? I have lost you. I think—ah, desire o' the world, what can I think of you? The thought of you dazzles me like flame—I do not think of you. I love you."

"Yes?" she queried, sweetly.

"I am going away," groaned Townsend, miserably, "for a long time."

"They always do," she lamented; "always."

"They?"

"Yes," she explained, lucidly; "when I—when I don't." She smiled reminiscently as Townsend rose.

"Think well of me," he pleaded.

"I will," she promised, with a swift, bewildering smile. Then she sighed.

She turned to a view of Capri. "It was very embarrassing," she murmured, "when that—that absentminded Duchess of Drummington asked after him."

"H'm!" said Townsend, drily.

"You see," she explained, "he died three years ago."

Townsend sat down with startling abruptness. "Desire o' the world!" said he.

"Really," said she, tossing her head, and moving swiftly, "one would think we were on a desert island!"

"Or a strange roof," laughed Townsend, contentedly. "Of course," he

continued, wrapt in meditation, "we'll spend the honeymoon in Breslau. Yes—say three days in Paris—there's a piece at the Palais Royal they tell me isn't half bad—and then to Breslau." He caught his breath joyously. "Meanwhile, a ring—a heavy, Byzantine ring, with the stones sunk deep in the dull gold—five stones—R, a ruby—O, an opal—B, a beryl—E, emerald—R, ruby again—and T, a topaz. A sign that I possess you, desire o' the world—a badge of slavery that will weigh down your slender fingers!"

Very calmly she regarded the Bay of Naples; very calmly she turned to the Taj Mahal. "A strange man," she reflected aloud, "who has seen me twice, unblushingly assumes he is about to marry me! Of course," she sighed, tolerantly, "I know he's only an irresponsible maniac; otherwise—"

"Otherwise?"

"He would never ask me to wear an opal. Why," she cried, in horror, "I—I couldn't think of it!"

"You mean—?" said Townsend.

She closed the album, sadly, but firmly. "Dear boy," said Mrs. Barry-Smith, "we are utter strangers to each other. Why, I may have an unbridled temper, or an imported complexion, or a liking for Ibsen, for all you know. What you ask is preposterous. After a while, perhaps—besides, opals are unlucky," she concluded, decisively.

"Desire o' the world," said Townsend, in dolorous wise, "you are

frightfully reasonable."

For a moment Mrs. Barry-Smith regarded him, critically. Then she shook her head, frowned, reopened the album, inspected the crater of Vesuvius, and sighed. A tender, pink-tipped hand rested on Townsend's arm for an instant—a very brief instant, yet one pulsing with a sense of many lights and of music playing somewhere, and of a certain man's heart keeping time to it.

"If you were to make it an onyx—"

said Mrs. Barry-Smith.

DISMISSAL?

FORGIVE," you pray; again, "forgive!"
But still you throw
To Stella, passing there below,
A glance too lingering and sweet;
And still you greet
Fair Ida, with that tender smile—
Yet all the while
"Forgive," you pray; "forgive!"

"I love," you cry; "I love but you!"
And yet you bend
O'er Rose's hand, and will not end
From whispering to Isabel
Quick words, that tell
In her bright eye and glowing cheek;
Then me you seek,
To cry, "I love but you!"

Go to, poor trifler! You must know
That he who sips
Too freely from all pretty lips
And finds in every lovely eye
Cause for a sigh,
Dwells but a moment in the thought
And then—is naught!

And yet—I do not know!

HILDEGARDE HAWTHORNE.



IN THEIR FAVOR

ONE thing can be said in favor of those smoking volcanoes," said Bunting to Larkin.

"Name it."

"They don't smoke cigarettes."

36

NATURAL CURIOSITY

MAMMA, what does papa do?"
"He is the head of a great business, dear, making lots of money for

"Some day, if I am good, will you take me down to his office and let me look at him?"

THE IMMORALITIES OF MUSIC

By M. de Dunois

"The music of the wakened lyre Dies not upon the quivering strings."

A LL the world is musical—or claims to be—and all the world is proud of its love for music. To be sure, there are some who, like foe Gargery, know only one tune, and even there are many who know none at all. But, despite these, the world really is rather musical than otherwise, and most folk agree with Shakespeare in his condemnation of the unmusical person.

According to popular prejudice, Saint Cecilia at her organ is eminently the figure of a proper saint. Indeed, the commonplace conception of heaven would be unrecognizable were the seraphic choirs omitted. The average Christian confidently expects to make his beatitude eternally tuneful by picking at the strings of a golden

haro.

And that which enters so definitely into the usual materialistic idea of Paradise has penetrated subtly into various philosophic systems. Thus, the Bible warrants a belief in the music of the spheres, for it tells us that the morning stars sang together the hymn of creation's joy. This and the like poetical imagery of the Hebrew Scriptures were interpreted as expressions of holy exactness by all the mystical metaphysicians who, like many moderns, made Pegasus a draughthorse.

A persistent practice of the ancients, of many races, was the analysis of Nature's harmonies. In this fashion the primitive Chinese resolved the world's scale into eight tones: the sounds, respectively, of the skin, the

stone, the metal, the baked earth, the silk, the wood, the bamboo and the gourd. But the Kabbalah, that marvelous compilation of the ancient rabbins in which are solved all mysteries, is much more elaborate. It declares that there are seven heavens, each with seven palaces and seven gates, corresponding subtly to the seven qualities of man and the seven intervals of music. The Sage of Hellas, master of mathematics and many marvels, recorded that he heard the mighty song of the singing spheres. And surely it were no unworthy dream to contemplate the universe as that limitless expanse wherein divinely majestic, infinitely splendid harmonic themes forever sound, wherein God is the supreme director of melodies throbbed by cycling spheres, by darting sunbeams, by volcano's roar and bird's pipe; wherein all things have their chorded part, wherein each and every atom is vocal, wherein only sin makes discords in the joyous symphony of life.

With such reinforcements of philosophical thought, it is small wonder that we, the ruck of mentality, confide with innocent completeness in music's worth. And this the more readily, emotions convince since our whether or no our minds are concerned. We, indeed, know in our own lives the manifold sweet charms of music, potent now as when Orpheus sang his spouse from hell. Happily, heedlessly, we believe in the pure and benign power of music. We regard with unmitigated approbation those homes where symbolic Syrinx shelters; even, we applaud, though perhaps only

tolerantly, those hearths where the Lares are somewhat inclined toward rag-time, as some Oriental gods toward fat. While we are most firmly convinced that, ethically as well as etymologically, virtues throng in the tuneful soul of the virtuoso.

But, counterpoint! Unfortunately, music, admirable as it may be—and none loves it more than I—is, like other delightful things, as dangerous as delicious. There are proofs of this, subjectively, objectively.

When Horace damned the crowd in his, "Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo," he bluntly, if metrically, expressed the unconfessed sentiment of many, even of most, even of some democratic per-Now, it is true that our chief barrier against the mob of vulgarity is in our own refinement. In the varying degrees and scopes of refinement is found a clue to the differentiation of classes—in these and in clubs. refinement is much praised. In some republican countries, where the equality of man is constitutional, though not always legal, there are societies and periodicals that flourish on the money drawn from seekers after culture microbes are cultured in these days etiquettish exactitudes are told to anxious correspondents in the daily press.

But refinement depends primarily on the senses. One becomes refined in gastronomic matters when, to use Milton's phrase, the palate becomes "judicious." Without palate Brillat-Savarin were of no account. The more the palate is trained, the more exact its discrimination, the more epicurean As of the gastronome, so of the esthete; he must depend for his best guidance on the skilled, artistic eye. The blind man, it is obvious, could have no appreciation of contours and hues, and only by much and careful training can he who has eyes to see, see with nicety. To many even that suggested earth of the utilitarian Confucius, a good, practical world, done in a monochrome of brown, would not be so very unsatisfactory, though to the lover of beauty, whose optic nerve is

sensitive to shades of vibration, such an earth must be a torture unspeakable. In like fashion, much of our refinement must depend on a cultivated sense of hearing. The ears are as necessary to music as is oxygen to flame. Beethoven could compose while deaf, but only because memory preserved that which he had once re-But there is no necessity of multiplying illustrations—no one will attempt to controvert the statement that refinement depends primarily on The cultivation of the the senses. body is properly essential to the best cultivation of the mind. The Greeks. in the time of Pericles, were the most refined people known to history, and they cultivated their bodies most. There are dangers in this—the history of the Greeks proves that; so, too, does the history of the greatest races and the greatest individuals through the ages.

Naturally, the musician must possess exquisite keenness of hearing. This a constant fact of experience. is The more skilled the musician, the more sagaciously expert his ear in the detecting of tonal properties. musician must cultivate his sense of hearing to the extreme of delicacy. In this direction the physical constitution demands the most careful attention; matter becomes of the first importance, and the musician finds ever that his ear develops into a possession that is at once a blessing and a curse. All the glories of tune and harmony are made possible to him by its faithful shrewdness, but often the sensitive shell causes his soul real agonies when it gathers vibrations that are to many pleasant music, to him distracting noise.

The cultivation of one sense carries with it the cultivation of all. The musician must give heed to his ear; that physical organ requires constant attention; and the regard thus voluntarily lavished on this single material part draws involuntary attention to the other material parts of the man's nature. The great composer not only dreams of celestial resolutions, he sees

visions that are the setting of the sounds. The reverse is true of the painter. Men with no notion of melody may paint with the mechanical exactness of draughtsmen, but the master who realizes on canvas a conception truly noble must possess an ear conscious of tonal beauties as well as an eve for color-schemes. solidarity of man's nature is such that the every power must be dynamic, if genius of any sort is to find its highest expression. Pursuing this train of thought, we are convinced that the ideal musician must develop every sense complementarily, as he cultivates his sense of sound. And this principle concerning the ideal applies in proportion to all makers of music.

The result is inevitable; the musician's senses clamor for attention; the material parts of him are persistently in evidence; the carnal nature assumes an importance aggressive and pervasive. With the receptive and acutely sensitive temperament which is always characteristic of the maestro each refinement of sense appeals to him in greater or less degree; by his imagination, normally active, constantly stimulated by his art, every delight that cultivated senses appreciate is presented to his contemplation as opportunity serves. A new succession of possible joys is shown in sensuous panorama to his eager soul. joys may be good for the man, and they may not. Certainly, there is insidious and incessant danger.

So much we may hint of the subjective dangers in music. Let us now turn to the objective phase.

Music, per se, is not always and necessarily a good thing. Indeed, it may be, even it often is, distinctly evil. In itself, music may be elevating and noble; in itself it may be degrading and vile; moreover, in itself music may be of an indeterminate character, and in that case its beneficial or its harmful effects depend upon the hearer's moral attitude, or upon determining environment. For example, certain florid styles of music may be used in the Mass; the devout

auditors hear the jubilation of angelic hymns. Precisely the same style of music rendered under non-religious conditions presents to the listeners visions of gay, wholly mundane revels. Like strains provoke one person to holy contemplation of the Blessed Virgin, another to thoughts of wanton luxuries. The bells beat madly their carillon of joy to the crowds on a festival of mirth; the same tones are a fierce jangle of alarm to those who listen in terror when the bells warn that an enemy is near.

All things emanate from God, but most things suit the devil's large needs, and that ingenious and profound spirit of evil uses them for his own damnatory ends. Music is not a solace and a strength to Israel only; the Prince of Darkness, lord of all wickedness as he is, is none the less a marvelous singer, as, alas! poor mortals know too well. Sennacherib's eighty thousand men were encamped about Jerusalem, the Angel Gabriel came to them in the night and by his music's spell drew away their very souls from out their bodies. Such is the tale of the rabbins. Satan, like Gabriel, gains men's souls by his melodies—but not The pathos of the fate for heaven. that comes on those who listen to the songs of the sirens is not an allegory. Sin's delights are never shown so fairly masked as when summoned to the view by music's enchanting art.

"Wein, Weib, und Gesang."

The last is not the least in Satan's triple crown.

The comprehension of music requires three parts in man: the body the mind, the soul. The body, whether pure or impure, must be of refined sensitiveness; the mind, logical or illogical, must be subtly intelligent toward the sounds' meaning; the soul, godlike or impious, must be so emotionable that it sways to the music's passion.

We may safely say that music does not necessarily make its lover better morally. On the contrary, it may work him irreparable moral injury, since it exposes him to multiplied and insidious temptations. If one would argue that he who is perverted by music, would without music have been perverted by something else, we reply that such a possibility in no way affects the contention that music may be a successful agent for immorality.

The tendency of our reasoning is justified by the examples in history of evil persons who were great musi-Sappho, who first employed the Mixolydian mode in music, was one of the most renowned voluptuaries in the world's records, so that her name is the symbol of a vice. Nero, the most monstrous of all the Roman monsters, was one of the most proficient musicians of his time. Paganini was grossly sensual in his disposition, while as an artist his name is synonymous with incomparable power, despite his fondness for legerdemain. In short, we may believe of him that, with equal power, he played the fiddle and—the devil. Chopin, whom George Sand described as a high-blown consumptive and exasperating nuisance, was a finished virtuoso at nineteen, and his morals, if he ever had any, were fin-ished at a like early age. The Abbé Liszt sought in the church a sure refuge from the women he had promised to marry. Berlioz composed a "Symphonie Fantastique," and lived one as well. It were unnecessary to multiply instances; it were tactless to refer to celebrities of more recent date. One acquainted with contemporary musical history can, perhaps, find other examples for himself. The lesson that music is not necessarily a purifying force is clearly taught. A broader illustration of the same truth is found in the state of ancient Greece. When the nation

was in its prime the people were musical; when it was in its decadence, they were more musical. Not only did good old Socrates thrum the lyre, but melody was the accomplishment of every youth, gilded, or ungilded, in the vice-plagued land.

In addition, the familiar facts of life oblige us to admit that music is openly active in vicious directions. A bayadere must be incited to her extravagances by the rush and throb of rude music. The cachucha of the Andalusians is a dance singularly vivacious, graceful and sensual. The Spanish clergy have made many efforts to suppress the dance. Unfortunately for their efforts, the music for the cachucha is such that the women when they hear it will dance, dance with spirit and abandon altogether delightful to themselves and obnoxious to the clerical authorities. fine, certain tunes would, were they heard for the first time from a cathedral organ, yet echo the license of a café chantant; there are airs that reek with the ribaldry of the can-can.

Such is music, and such is man. Like man, music, too, is "the glory and the scandal of the universe.' Music need not harm any, but it has, unhappily, manifold capacities for harm. Like all other of man's enjoyments, it may work him vast moral injury. We hear endless platitudes concerning the refining power of music. Yes, it is a mighty refining force, one that cannot be too widely employed. Only, it is well to bear in mind that its efinement is not always and necessarily for good, and to remember that the moral taints it may engender are most daintily laid on the soul's whiteness, so delicately and so subtly that the defilement may hardly be noted until the ruin of virtue is complete.

3

IT WAS COSTLY

"No, the engagement with Miss Spendthrift?"

A WOMAN FRIEND

By Zoe Anderson-Norris

THE light of Adrian's cigar twinkled between impatient first and second fingers. Presently the hand rested itself on the stone ledge of the veranda, and, his eyes fixed on the Hudson, he commenced his argument at the point where he had left off.

"Dorothy," said he—Dorothy, very still in her Summer white, occupied an adjacent rocking-chair similar to his own, her eyes also fixed on the slowmoving boats on the river—"it takes several eons to convince a woman that an hour or so of a man's time should belong to him, to do with as he pleases; that a few days of his life should be left free to be given to his old companions, men companions, friends he had made before he was married. friends who must not be neglected if they are to be kept. Now, we have been married for three months, and I have never yet been able to convince you that a second of my time should be my own."

Dorothy interrupted him, gently. "Didn't you say," she reminded him, "that Donaldson told you it took two years exactly to convince his wife of the

selfsame thing?"

"But," with a comprehensive gesture of explanatory hands, "look at the difference in the wives!"

The stroke, for some incomprehensible reason, failed of the desired effect. He hastened to obliterate its failure.

"A man must have the companionship of his kind," he went on. "He craves it; it is necessary to his nature; and it is no discredit to his wife, Dorothy," suavely. "No matter how charming a woman may be, her companionship wears on one in the course of time. No matter how happily a man is married, he occasionally needs a change."

He flashed a moody glance on her. "If it isn't given him voluntarily," he continued, mutinously, "he takes it."

Dorothy gave vent to an almost imperceptible sigh, but said nothing.

"Once in a while," continued her husband, "a man must be with the He wants to lock arms with them, to laugh with them, to talk with He wants to talk horse and dog and automobile, things about which woman knows nothing, or next to nothing. It is as necessary for him to escape now and then from the hothouse atmosphere of the drawing-room and take to the woods as it is for him to breathe. Sometimes a mad desire seizes him to jump in a boat and row up a strong stream against the current, employing his superfluous energy in the long, free swing of the oars."

"I am not very good at understanding," acknowledged Dorothy, interrupting, "but I can partly understand that. The only time I ever got a chance to scream as much as I wished was in the Rockies. I pretended to be waking the echoes, to see how they sounded, ringing off into cañon after cañon, then dropping into silence; but I was really screaming off the nervousness that had been accumulating for years."

After a moment of silence, "Grownup people," she added, "should be allowed to do as the children do—lie down once in a while and kick and scream, and kick and scream."

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"If you understand the situation so well," mused Adrian, rather surprised that she should have understood it so well, "why put obstacles in the way of my working off steam?"

He leaned toward her in the dark.

"Do you know what I should like to do right now?" he queried.

"No; what?"

"Rush deep into the underbrush of a wood and tramp and tramp and tramp, until I lost myself; then throw heart, soul and spirit into the work of finding myself again—and so forget."

Dorothy opened her lips to say, "Forget what?" but, upon reflection, closed them again. Clasping her hands behind her head, she rocked slowly

back and forth.

"You couldn't conveniently row up a river at this time of night," she argued, "without running serious risk of getting drowned; and, no matter how reckless you may be, I am sure you don't wish to be drowned. Neither could you seek a thicket and lose yourself with impunity. There might be robbers or bears. But maybe it isn't too late yet to roam down Broadway in search of a boon companion. Would you like to do that?"

Adrian thrust two fingers in his vest

pocket and took out his watch.

"It is never too late," he smiled, "to find some friend on Broadway, where people stay up all night. Nine—early!"

Dropping his cigar on the grass, he leaned toward her. "Are you sure," he inquired, with anxious solicitude,

"that you won't care?"

Dorothy watched a little electric car on the Jersey side until it was out of sight, before she answered:

"I am sure."

She had hardly moved out of her position, though it was nearly an hour later, when an automobile whisked down the drive and stopped at the curb, its two lamps glowing in the dusk, like eyes.

"Is that you, Dorothy?" called out

a voice.

Dorothy, gathering up her skirts,

ran down the steps and across the square grass-plot to the curb.

"Yes," she replied. "Why do they keep on thumping so, after they have

stopped?"

"Don't ask me. Are you alone?"

"There are flowers and the electric car on the Jersey side, and tugboats pulling things up and down the river, and the stars are near to-night—so near you can almost fan them away!"

"But where is Adrian?"

"I like these automobiles," said Dorothy, "but when you are standing by one you always want to be patting the horse's head. That's the trouble."

"But where," insisted her cousin,

"is Adrian?"

"You see," she explained, "it took Donaldson two years to convince his wife that he must have a few hours of the day or night to himself, but with me it was different. I am another sort of wife, a rather superior sort, I am led to believe. With me, it took only three months. Adrian is away."

"Where?"

"You must know," continued Dorothy, "that no matter how happily a man is married, he feels the need of the society of other men. There are so many, many things to talk about with men that you can't talk about with women—they don't understand. What do women know about horses and dogs and automobiles? It's the same as trying to take a long walk with a woman. Fancy a woman mincing along in high-heeled shoes, tagging after a man, tired and complaining."

"Dorothy," urged her cousin, "come and take a little drive with me. I haven't seen you to talk with you for the longest time—not since you were married. Go get your hat and come!"

"What will they say?"

"Nonsense! Aren't we cousins?"

"Two or three times removed."

"It doesn't matter, so long as we are cousins. Go and get your hat."

He hummed a tune as he waited for her. Once he interrupted it with a remark. "Stars near enough to be fanned away," he repeated; "poor

little lonely thing!"

Then she came down the steps in a hat of lace to match her gown, and got in; the automobile thumped, snorted, quieted, and they were off across town through the Park, thence to Fifth avenue, thence to Broadway, brilliant as in the daytime.

On their way back home, they brought up at a café that was arranged quite in the Parisian style, flanked by flowers, with little tables enclosed by a glistening green fence of box.

"Shall we stop here," he asked,

"and have an ice?"

And Dorothy answered, brightly,

"If you insist."

When he had succeeded in subduing the automobile, which had again taken to thumping, they alighted and followed an obsequious waiter to a small white table set in a corner, somewhat apart from the others. Glancing carelessly about, she saw a familiar face. With a slight elevation of eyebrows, indicative of surprise, she bowed.

"It's Adrian," said she.

Her cousin, turning in the same direction, bowed also.

By that time the waiter had brought

the ices.

"It's a strange thing," murmured Dorothy, raising a spoonful to her lips, "this fondness men have for the society of other men. It is a real need. In the course of time the society of the most charming woman palls upon them. It doesn't compensate for that of men. Nobody—that is, no reasonable person—should expect it to. Why should it? A man is a man, and a woman is a woman."

"But," objected her cousin, "that is not a man Adrian is with, it is a

woman."

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Dorothy appeared not to hear.

"A strong nature," she resumed, "must associate with a strong nature. It is the law of nature. Like seeks

like. Just as one molecule searches for another molecule, so man searches for man. After a rain, have you ever watched drops of water dangling on a wire? how they rush to each other, intermingle, then fall to the ground?"

"Yes."

"Well, the need of one man for the society of another man seems to me to be something like that."

The automobile had puffed to the curb for the second time and had puffed away, and Dorothy once more sat on the veranda. As it was now several hours later, the constellations had changed somewhat, but they were still comparatively near; the tugs still towed; the electric car ran at intervals of greater length, but it ran. As before, she rocked back and forth, with the night for company.

After a long time a figure came in sight, and Adrian, having ascended

the steps, stood before her.

They exchanged some trivial remarks concerning nothing of much

importance; then:

"Dorothy," he said, with gentle firmness, "Dick is your cousin; but do you think it looks well for you to be seen with him at a public café so soon after we are married, particularly as he used to be a sort of sweetheart of yours? Is that kind of thing customary? Have you thought of what people will say?"

"Yes," she answered, "I have thought of what people will say; but I couldn't help it. A sudden impulse came over me, which I found it im-

possible to control."

"And what," he questioned, eagerly, his voice faltering a trifle, "was that

impulse, Dorothy?"

"It was the irresistible longing," replied she, quietly, "that now and then comes over a woman, no matter how happily married she is, to be with a woman friend."

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TIPS come to him who waits.

THE CREATION OF LILITH

By Bliss Carman

THIS happened in the Garden,
Ages on ages since.
When noontide made a pleasant shade
Of ilex, pear and quince,

The Gardener sat and pondered
Some beauty rarer still
Than any he had wrought of earth
And fashioned to his will.

"Now who will be her body?"
"I," said the splendid rose,
"Color, fire and fragrance,
In imperial repose."

"Who will be her two eyes?"
"I," said the flag of blue,
"Sky and sea all shadowy
Drench me wholly through."

"Who will be her bright mouth?"
"I," the carnation said,
"With my old Eastern ardor
And my Persian red."

"Who will be, among you,
The glory of her hair?"
His glance went reaching through the noon;
The yellow rose was there.

"Who will be her laughter, Her love-word and her sigh?" Among the whispering tree-tops A breath of wind said, "I."

"And whence will come her soul?"
Answer there was none.
The Gardener breathed upon her mouth,
And lo, there had been done

The miracle of beauty
Outmarveling the flowers;
While the great blue dial
Recorded the slow hours.

LE BRACELET

Par Paul Margueritte

A PETITE Madame Doz ne souhaitait rien tant qu'un bracelet, pour l'anniversaire de ses dix ans de mariage. Etait-ce qu'elle se regardait comme l'ayant bien et légitimement gagné, par tant d'heures et de soins consacrés à son mari et au ménage, à habiller ou à sortir les enfants? Cela lui apparaissait-il au contraire comme trop beau, plus beau qu'elle ne méritait, car ces dix ans de vie n'avaient pas été sans bouderies ni querelles? Quoi qu'il en soit, elle exigeait un bracelet; et pas un bracelet d'argent—d'or, s'il vous plaît, mais d'or solide et pas en "doublé"; elle voulait une gourmette de cheval, grande largeur, à mailles lourdes et cossues.

Seulement, cela coûtait cher, et Hippolyte, son mari, hochait la tête: pourrait-on? ne pourrait-on pas?

L'anniversaire approchait, et Hippolyte ne se prononçait pas. Madame Doz était sur les épines. Quand elle sortait avec lui, elle l'arrêtait devant tous les bijoutiers.

"Oh! vois celui-là," disait-elle.
"Non! pas le petit; il n'est pas distingué, d'abord. Le gros! Demande le prix, mon chéri, veux-tu? Cela n'engage à rien."

Hippolyte, qui était timide et d'une timidité accrue par le sentiment de sa position modeste, hésitait; la jolie petite Madame Doz le poussait, une fièvre de convoitise dans ses yeux couleur de noisette:

"Va donc! on ne te mangera pas!"
Et quand il reparaissait, confus, en balbutiant: "On en demande cinq cent cinquante francs."

Elle disait avec conviction: "Ce n'est pas trop cher." Elle ajoutait: "Tu me l'achèteras, n'est-ce pas, chéri, mon bracelet? Si tu ne me l'achetais pas pour nos dix ans de mariage, tu sais, je serais malade, et si triste! Je croirais que tu ne m'aimes pas; et, au fait, tu ne m'aimes guère, je le crains bien, puisque tu montres si peu d'empressement à me faire plaisir!"

Hippolyte baissait la tête, comme font les faibles; très amoureux de Fanny, il acceptait ses rebuffades sans parler. Oh! il n'eût pas demandé mieux que d'acheter le bracelet, mais cinq cent cinquante francs dans un petit ménage, la somme comptait. Parfois, il remuait ses doigts l'un après l'autre, comme un homme qui calcule.

"Qu'est-ce que tu fais, mon chat?" demandait la petite femme. "Tu penses à donner le bracelet à ta chérie jolie? Ecoute, je voulais me faire faire une robe, une robe pour toi, une robe pour te faire plaisir, une robe bleue comme tu les aimes! Eh bien! si tu m'achètes le bracelet, je me priverai de la robe. Hein! c'est du mérite, ça?"

Il objectait timidement:

"Ne disais-tu pas que les enfants ont besoin de linge, et que les pantalons de Loulou sont un peu courts?"

Elle affirmait: "Cela ne presse pas,

je les allongerai."

Alors, comme un escargot qui rentre sa tête et ses cornes, Hippolyte rentrait en lui-même et n'en sortait plus; il méditait, perplexe: "Cela lui fera tant de plaisir!" Mais, d'autre part, la raison, la sagesse—

II

FANNY, un matin, tournant par la

chambre, lui dit d'un air grave:

"Et si je contribuais à l'achat du bracelet, si je te donnais une partie de l'argent, qu'est-que tu dirais?"

Il ouvrit de grands yeux.

"Ah! j'ai tort!" soupira-t-elle. "Cet argent, je l'ai économisé sou à sou sur le ménage, j'ai grappillé dix sous par là, deux francs par ici, et je comptais bien que tu ne le saurais jamais; mais qu'est-ce que tu veux? je suis trop bonne—je suis trop bête! Je te vois là si malheureux. Eh bien! je vais te donner cent francs de mon argent. C'est tout ce que j'ai; ne t'imagine pas que j'ai économisé davantage. Les veux-tu? Nous paierons le bracelet avec."

Hippolyte tendit la main. Mais, par une confiance qui l'honorait, elle déclare qu'elle payerait elle-même le marchand.

"Ecoute, nous y passerons ce soir, à ta sortie du bureau. Plus j'y pense, plus ce gros bracelet me dit. Nous entrerons et je l'essaierai, comme cela, en passant. Cela n'engage à rien."

Le soir, ils s'arrêtèrent, comme les jours précédents, à la devanture du

bijoutier.

"Oh, le voilà!" s'écria Fanny. "Regarde, il est vraiment très beau. Comme il brille! Entrons. Seulement, tu ne l'achèteras pas, tu ne diras rien, tu me laisseras marchander."

III

Ils pénétrèrent dans le magasin. Madame Doz se fit montrer le bracelet, l'ajusta à son poignet; elle le regardait amoureusement, en soupesait le poids, en caressait le poli, en secouait les feux avec des mines si gentilles que le bijoutier lui-même, homme gras et chauve, subissait le charme de la petite femme, et lui souriait de son plus aimable sourire. Elle compta bien profiter de cette séduction et demanda:

"Combien, monsieur, ce bracelet?

Quatre cents francs?"

"Cinq cent cinquante," glissa-t-il tout bas, avec une insinuante douceur.

"C'est trop cher!"

Il sourit, d'un sourire appuyé d'une ceillade langoureuse: "Non, ce n'est pas trop cher. Il vous va si bien, et c'est un beau travail; j'y perds à vous le vendre. Pour vous, ce sera cinq cent quarante."

Elle regardait, perplexe, Hippolyte. "C'est encore bien cher, n'est-ce pas?" demanda-t-elle d'un petit air de chatterie, une hypocrisie rusée dans la

voix.

"C'est—un peu cher, oui," murmura le mari, "mais si ça te fait bien plaisir—" Il avait l'air résigné et malheureux d'un homme qui pense: "Moi, ça ne me ferait aucun plaisir de me promener avec une gourmette d'or au poignet. Non, aucun! Mais des goûts et des couleurs—"

"Alors," fit-elle en se décidant, " je le

garde. Paye, mon ami."

Il tira son porte-monnaie en la regardant.

"Ah! oui, c'est vrai!—tu n'as pas

assez."

Elle tira de sa poche, avec lenteur et sans empressement, un petit portemonnaie, y prit les cent francs. "Voilà," fit-elle avec un soupir. Et elle réclama une facture, en regardant le bracelet qui faisait bel effet, vraiment, sur sa peau.

IV

SITOT dehors:

"Eh, bien! es-tu contente?"

"Oh! mon chéri," s'écria-t-elle avec feu, "que tu es bon! Je t'embrasserais si nous n'étions pas dans la rue!"

Elle s'arrêta, cinq minutes après, sous une vitrine éclairée, examina le bracelet. "C'est curieux," fit-elle, "je le croyais plus gros: est-ce bien le même que nous avons vu hier?"

"Mais bien sûr, ma chère."

"Oh! il est très beau! très beau!" fit-elle.

Cinq minutes plus loin, elle s'arrêta encore pour voir si le fermoir tenait bien. "Pourvu que ce soit solide!" dit-elle avec une petite moue. Au dîner, elle demanda: "Alors, vraiment, il te paraît beau?"

"Mais oui, et toi?"

"Oh! moi, je suis très contente, très contente. Je le croyais plus gros seulement.

Et elle ajouta, le feu d'un désir

nouveau dans les yeux:

"Vois-tu, pour le prochain anniversaire, dans dix ans, ce que je veux, c'est une bague de brillants fins avec une perle au milieu—une perle grosse comme un pois."

Un petit silence suivit; et elle con-

clut par ce mot bien féminin:

"C'est si amusant, de désirer!"



PING-PONGOMANIA

WHEN first at ping-pong I essayed, Alas, to my regret, The airy sphere sailed far away,

And nowhere near the

net

I persevered and changed my aim;
The best that I could get,
Would be to send that horrid ball

Right underneath the

Success I hoped would some day come And I might win a set; But still that irksome ball, you see, Went plumb into the $\frac{1}{2}$

At last success has come to me— The smile is with me yet! I've learned the way to send the ball

so nicely o'er the

HARRY CROWN BLOOMBERG.



ON THE SHORE

"HOW sweet it would be to live alone with you in yonder lighthouse!" he whispered, tenderly.

"Yes," she murmured, abstractedly; "and do light housekeeping."

TO DOLLY

DOLLY, oft I've sung of thee,
Hymned thy praise from sea to sea,
In what really seemed to me
Terms endearing.
There were others, I admit;
Business, dear, demanded it;
That I angered you a bit,
I'm a-fearing.

Still, just think of all the times
I have put you in my rhymes,
Till it seemed that wedding chimes
Were a-nearing.
How I gave you eyes of blue,
Eyes of gray or hazel hue,
Gave you sometimes black eyes, too,
I'm a-fearing.

You've had small hands, brown or white,
And a figure plump or slight,
Large or just a wee, small mite
Oft appearing.
And your hair, scarce twice the same—
Raven, golden, auburn flame,
E'en a chestnut it became,
I'm a-fearing.

Listen, Dolly, now I pray;
Let me put these masks away;
Let me see yourself to-day—
'Twould be cheering.
For a thought which doth appall,
Lately hath me in its thrall:
That you don't exist at all,
I'm a-fearing!

TRUMAN ROBERTS ANDREWS



HONESTY is the best policy," asseverated the stubborn-chinned man on the night train.

"It isn't the best policy in my business," observed the man with the open countenance.

"And why not in yours?" blustered the stubborn-chinned man, aggressively.

"Because," replied the man with the open countenance, "I am a manufacturer of antique furniture."

THE ENTERTAINER

By Mrs. Everard Cotes

(Sara Jeannette Duncan)

CANNOT in the least say why my interest was so completely caught by the two women as they walked into the dining-room of the hotel at Lake Onogo; there was nothing about either of them of a character which could be called distinctive. Perhaps that was itself the subtle reason; in America it does single you out, if you are a woman, to lack the more trenchant marks of personality. These two would have been ordinary anywhere, ordinary and ordinary middle-aged. The mother stooped a little, the girl held herself very straight. They were both in black; their dress spoke plaintively of effort to keep within hailing distance of the current fashion. In little ways, the cut of her sleeve. the dressing of her hair, the daughter was punctiliously abreast of it, but she was so barely adequate, so undecorated, that she might have served as a theory, a diagram of the mode. She had a pale composure which might have been anxiety in more private moments; it was the look of a person accustomed to deal timidly, and not always successfully, with a variety of trying circumstances. The composure sat upon features which, if not exactly pretty, were at least very well; she seemed just to attain good looks as she seemed just to attain everything else, in spite of things that were against her, cheekbones rather broad, eyes rather light, The one fact about a hint of anemia. the two women that one could really lay hold of was their manner, which was so unobtrusive as to be quite marked.

The young man came upon the scene

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hardly ten minutes later. As he took his seat, I saw the mother and daughter exchange a glance, which to any aroused intelligence—and by that time mine was very active—would have thrown a flood of light and created a "There he is again!" their situation. eyes exclaimed, with a strong underlining of disapproval; the girl compressed her lips. After that they looked every way but his, though he, from his uneasy seat, was plainly striving not to make his gaze at them too fixed and too devouring. withdrew his eyes by jerks, then let his glance again circle nearer and nearer, until it dropped upon the pair with an absorption that proved the insincerity of its interest in anything A mind of the higher mathematical sort might have measured this centripetal glance, it moved with such method to its centre.

It was unmistakable that he, the new-comer, belonged to the community already numerous in the hotel; he bore all the race-marks by which we most easily identify the Hebrew. He was dressed with the nattiness that attaches to the American man's attire, and to this his bosom added the opulent flash of a solitaire. was cuffed and curled and waxed and brushed to the last possibility—perfumed, too, I imagine. Yet his person was meager, even in its expensive outfit; he looked amiable and timid, but steadfast, like an animal under magnetism. Perceiving his infatuation, one involuntarily computed his resources, and from the first I was sorry for him—he had so little beyond the material, and that was so plainly scorned. Yet his regard, when it fastened upon the girl in black, was wonderful in its beatitude; one would have thought it, but for her plain indignation, the quiet glorying of an accepted lover. I was at some pains, in leaving the room, not to intersect it.

Incident, even subjective and undeveloped, was incident at Onogowhich was, to be precise, a lake and a hotel, in a mountain solitude of the Adirondacks. It had once been a hunter's lodge in the wilderness; while I stayed there it held two hundred Summer people, most of them from New York and Philadelphia, who came in order to be more luxurious than they were at home, with the agreeable contrast of the forest primeval. By day the two hundred sported out of doors or rocked in the wide verandas, but by night we still knew, if not the hunters' solitude, at least his lack of resource. We were hemmed in, thrown in upon one another; beyond the electric lights of the hotel there was nothing but the stars in the lake and the shy deer in the We gathered nightly, for lack of alternative, in the big, bright drawing-room, where, from behind the papers brought by the evening mail, we discreetly observed one another and proceeded to such acquaintance as seemed warrantable. The room was all done in yellow damask, the long curtains that floated inward with the firscented wind were patterned with yellow fleurs-de-lis; there were flowers in bowls, etchings, a grand piano. Granted an interest, the place, I reflected, was pleasant enough to turn it over in; and that was the very moment when, without circumstance or ceremony, my young lady in black took up her position beside her mother, who occupied the music-stool. The elder lady struck two or three chords that sounded premonitory and did in fact insure silence; and then, immediately and unhesitatingly, the daughter lifted her voice in song. The performance was so direct and matter-of-fact as to be almost disconcerting; the two hundred stared, not quite sure for an instant that a liberty had not been taken with their corporate body. It was a surprise in the nature of an attack; I, too, was so astonished that I looked rather than listened. The pair at the piano were quite isolated, they turned between them the pages of their own music, going through the song with a sort of heroic patience, as if it were all in the day's work. Plainly, they did their very best, expecting no allowances, putting out no claim to the kindly judgment of friends. odd detachment made an appeal to us all, though this was the last thing they would have been aware of, and at the end of the song—it had the gay familiarity of a popular opera—the room applauded, as it were, the intrepidity of the singer.

The young lady bowed, unsmilingly, as if this were only another part of the routine; the elder one, also, halfturned her head to acknowledge the compliment and perked herself oldfashionedly and settled her bracelets, while her daughter took more sheets from a portfolio, placed them before her and waited again in the attitude of minstrelsy, while the precise fingers struck the chords of prelude. It was then that I, glancing around for some solution, caught sight of the hotel manager standing stolidly in the door. His look was critical, his thumbs were in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, a pose which we had learned to recognize as his most managerial. The girl, too, undoubtedly saw him; her face reflected a spur and she sang in his special direction. The piece was one of those high, cascading Italian things, a tour de force for a prima donna. It explained very clearly and rather painfully that the young lady who rendered it was no prima donna, present or potential; it flouted a poor little unwarrantable ambition; and the three daughters of the Philadelphia railway magnate, who had just finished their musical education at Heidelberg, glanced at one another and smiled. Yet the performance was, in a way, creditable; it was marked by real effort,

sincere pains and a degree of achievement; it made one just sorry for the lack of discernment that had set the singer such a task. The manager, I noticed, stood it through with pursed lips and an eye on the audience. When it was finished, he turned upon his heel, with a movement which said that, if there were people in the hotel who liked that sort of thing, there it was for them; he didn't pretend to like it.

There it was for them, and they listened with commendable politeness till this second instalment of the offering was complete. Then a great many of them gathered up their fans or the innumerable pages of their newspapers, and made restlessly for the veranda or the smoking-room. There it was for them, but they had plainly had enough. When the third song came to an end, only a few elderly ladies were left, scattered about on the yellow sofas; most of them of the stout, complacent kind that never sit down for less than an hour, and refuse no form of entertainment after dinner. And, too, people began to talk. At the noise of the voices and the movement, I thought I noticed a trembling in the wrinkled fingers that played the accompaniment. As they finished, she, the mother, looked furtively around at the emptying room; her thin cheek flushed, and she glanced at her daughter, who spread before her still another song. Meeting the mother's eyes, the girl stood for a moment irresolute; then, with a quick movement, she swept the music from the piano, and the two left the room by steps that plainly tried not to hurry.

Had they gone to cry in their bedrooms? It was impossible not to feel uncomfortable about them. It occurred to me, quite as something to be resented, that even the insignificant young man of the dinner-table had failed them; he, at all events, might have contributed a faithful pair of ears. But, as I walked out upon the veranda for a good-night look at the lake, a figure shrank still deeper into a garden chair to let me pass, and I saw that I misjudged a devotion which had been there all the time, pulling at a long cigar, worshiping in the shadows.

When I went next morning to complain of the ice-water boy, I found the manager approachable, almost amiable. Some domestic satisfaction, perhaps, had warmed him. As a rule he froze the marrow of our bones and made our blood boil, a capacity in this class of person in America which, for some curious reason, seems to pay. But that morning he turned upon my complaint a countenance almost human; he said he would attend to the icewater boy, and his tone suggested that I might, without any serious risk, prolong the conversation. I immediately asked him who were the ladies who had contributed to our entertainment the night before. face clouded at once, and I shrank into myself, yet hung upon his an-

"Their name's Adams," he replied; "Miss Adams is an entertainer."

"An entertainer," I repeated, clinging desperately to my opportunity.

"That's what I said." He fixed upon me an irritated eye, which coldly recognized that there were many fools in the world. "The idea is to amuse the guests—they do it for their board. Not much amusement in it last night, far as I could see. They regularly cleared the room."

"What an extraordinary idea!" I

ejaculated, meaning no harm.

"I don't know as it's so very extraordinary. Over there on the Continent they keep English Church ministers to preach on Sundays, and they don't give 'em a cent but their board. Resident parsons wouldn't cut any pie on this side, but we've got to do something, so we turn on an entertainer. Plenty of 'em glad to come."

"It's new to me," I said. "Does the entertainer go from place to

Where was Miss Adams last?"

"At the Bennett House, Ossawepie, and I wish she'd stayed there; but I guess they had to get her to move along. I might 'a' known the way she wrote she wasn't any goodshe was a considerable sight too anxious. I expect it'll be a pretty hard job getting her out of these woods; they say the old lady's consumptive, and this is a long way the best place for her."

Without further parley, the manager turned his substantial back upon me and moved off. His walk was a kind of square lurch; it expressed, to my indignant mind, the most callous intention. Inwardly I said, "In half an hour their boxes will be at the

door."

I glanced at the register; there they were among the arrivals of yesterday, "Miss Emmeline Adams, Mrs. Adams, Detroit, Mich." The handwriting was evidently that of the mother, and it was touching, the way in which she gave the girl precedence. It spoke of belief and admiration; it almost required one to find her a genius. But what a handicap of a name, the very stamp of mediocrity— Emmeline Adams! Farther down I looked, and duly found the little Jew, also, Mr. Paul Nathan. There could be no doubt, he was the only man in the day's list. I had, at all events, the labels to the situation.

It was frequently said in the hotel that Mr. Humboldt's bark was worse than his bite. I never could see that the proverb should excuse either barking or biting, but, later on in the day, I was inclined to acknowledge its rough justice as applied to the man-The Onogo Hotel stage-coach did not carry the Adamses off to catch the next train. Instead, I found them after luncheon, occupying my particular nook in the veranda, the magazine I had left there reposing in Mrs. Adams's lap.

"Now, this is your chair!" she exclaimed, getting up in a way that expressed a habit of relinquishment

with apology. The daughter, who was sitting on the edge of the ver-

anda, did not look around.

"No, really," I replied; and, indeed, it was not my property. magazine I will acknowledge, but please keep it if it interests you.

And pray don't get up."

Mrs. Adams sank back, with a flattered air, and I cast about me for a way of improving my opportunity. I said something about the lake looking best from that corner, and she hurried to agree with me and to make further comments that would show her quite as well disposed toward acquaintance as I was. She was pathetically anxious to talk, and presently she interrupted herself to say, with shy pleasantry, "Now, if you won't sit down, I'll feel as if I just had to give up your chair"; at which I did sit down.

We talked as people do talk in casual contact, and I learned that Mrs. Adams's home was in Detroit, which was, apparently, a city of beautiful homes. On the avenue where Mrs. Adams once—but now, alas, no longer —lived, they were ravishing, wreathed in clematis, the mower never silent and the garden-sprinkler never quiet upon their lawns. I had almost to promise not to go back to England without seeing Detroit.

The girl, all this time, sat unmoved on the edge of the veranda, her elbows on her knees, her chin propped in her hands, her eyes fixed on the afternoon shadows in the water. I glanced now and then at the high shoulders and the narrow back she presented to us, thinking I saw obstinacy and a tinge of resentment in the way she sat there, confronting the lake as if it were the situation, in which she found a hostility at which I could only guess-

poor thing! "I must thank you," I had at last the chance of saying, "for the pleasure you gave us last night. It is so seldom that any one touches the piano in the evenings. It has been mute

I had a pang of compunction, Mrs.

Adams looked so gratified. "Why, how sweet of you to say so!" she exclaimed, with such feeling that I "I must wondered what I had said. tell my daughter. It will quite cheer her up—we all want cheering up sometimes, don't we? Or, perhaps," she went on, lowering her voice with a little nod of private understanding that took my good heart all for granted, "you'll tell her yourself-she would value it so much more! Emmeline! I want to present you to a lady who has just been complimenting me on your voice." She turned to me. "Now, might I ask your name?"

I supplied it, and Mrs. Adams effected the introduction. "My daughter, Miss Emmeline Adams. This lady, daughter, has been saying such nice things about your singing

last night."

Miss Adams had not risen; she returned my bow from where she sat, still leaning her head on one hand, with a smile which she evidently kept in listless readiness for casual strangers like me. At Mrs. Adams's words she blushed sharply, and a twitch, hardly a frown, passed across her "I heard what she said, forehead. mother," she retorted, quickly, fixing upon her parent calm eyes which had not, above all things, the intention of being taken in. I rushed, of course, into the breach; it would have required, I think, an iron rectitude to keep out of it. Afterward I myself blushed to remember the extravagances I had uttered. I praised her voice, her production, her feeling; there was nothing I did not praise. simply sat and looked at me, with more reserve than she had shown to her mother, but plainly undeceived. Her open disbelief would have been really more than I deserved, but for the constant delighted chorus of the mother, who fairly bubbled over with appreciation of my discernment. At last Emmeline turned upon her a forlorn little smile.

"Mother's always trying to jolly me up," she said.

"Well." cried Mrs. Adams, with a

sprightly gesture, "and if I didn't who would?"

The unintentional shaft struck home, and the girl's face clouded again. Tears stood in her eyes. "You may well ask," she said, and got up hurriedly. "I'm going to lie down," she explained. "Don't stay out after the mist rises, mother," and she went into the house.

The mother sent a deprecating glance after her. "It seems to me," she said with a sigh, "that young people require a great deal more encouragement nowadays than they used to. Dear me! when I was that child's age a kind word about my playing would uplift me for a week. This generation must have notices in the newspapers." "It is a competitive age," I remarked,

blandly.

"But my daughter is not by any means herself to-day," Mrs. Adams went on, placidly; "she's got a real

sore throat."

I hoped it was nothing serious; and Mrs. Adams said that it was not, that Miss Adams was subject to these ulcerated throats, that they didn't mean anything, but always made her feel low; they were worse in some ways than being down sick. "We were to have given a 'ballad evening' tonight, only for that," she explained. "Nothing takes, we find, like a ballad evening. But Mr. Humboldt has consented to postpone it till she is better."

It was then that I brought myself to admit that Mr. Humboldt's bark was worse than his bite.

"We do that, you know," Mrs. Adams continued, with a quick glance at me. "Miss Adams gets teaching in the Winter, and in the Summer we make a kind of tour, eking out my little pension by entertaining. Last year we took the resorts on the Maine coast; this year we're doing the Adirondacks."

I have a practical nature and the question that rose to my lips in view of their plain failure was: "Have you ever tried steamboats?" Then, remembering, as I instantly did, the Italian fiddles and flute, the man with

rings in his ears who whistled "Listen to the Mocking Bird," and the dirty felt hat that went around afterward in quest of silver, I was more than thankful that I had not asked it; especially as Mrs. Adams very soon gave me to understand that she considered entertaining as a "non-paying guest"—her own expression—much more dignified than doing it on any basis that might be represented by a hat.

"We meet so many pleasant people in that way, people of real culture who come and speak to us," she innocently preened; "and it is quite a holiday outing for my daughter. We feel sufficiently repaid by that, and prefer not to ask more."

While I pondered the holiday outing from Miss Adams's point of view, a sudden fit of coughing seized the mother. She bent under it; it was "There!" violent and long. gasped, straightening herself at last and restoring her handkerchief to her pocket. "It must be distressing to hear any one go on and on, like that, but if you know the satisfaction it is to have a real good cough! When my daughter's around I daren't; she gets so worked up about it ever since a doctor told us it made me worse to cough. I don't believe a morsel of it myself, and as I've had to get along for the last four years with only one lung," she concluded, smiling, "I ought to know."

As she was in the midst of telling me how many distinguished people with one lung had attained old age, and how "it" always skipped a generation —her grandmother had died of "it" and, above all, how she had benefited that Summer from the marvelous air of the Adirondack region, a shadow struck across the veranda between us, and we looked up, to discover its substance in Mr. Nathan. He stood defined against the glowing afternoon, taking off his hat with one hand and with the other casting away, rather markedly, a large and undoubtedly expensive cigar. Mrs. Adams's lip straightened; she seemed to straighten everywhere; she had only the barest civility for the deference of his greeting.

"Should you care to have me take you out on the lake, Mrs. Adams?" he asked. His voice was pleasant, but his smile, alas, had too short an upper lip; it curved up at the corners and the nose hooked down over it; it seemed to draw the narrow eyes nearer together. The timidity and supplication of the Ghetto started into life as he smiled.

"Why, that's very kind of you, I'm sure," she replied, and the cordial words contrasted oddly with the frigid inflection; "but I think I won't go on the water to-night; thank you all the same."

He stood rebuffed. The resource of locomotion did not seem to occur to him; he remained with his hands in his pockets, chinking coin, his gaze vaguely roaming over the woods and the lake.

"I hope Miss Adams likes it as well here as at the Bennett House," he brought forth at last, with elaborate indifference.

"I guess she does, thank you."

"Well, good evening."
"Well, good evening."

As he turned away, Mrs. Adams gave me a look which indicated her certainty that I understood. I did understand, but I felt hostile; I thought she had been hard, and I blankly returned her glance.

"He is a Mr. Nathan," she explained.
"We knew him at the Bennett House and at Chippeha; we don't seem able to go anywhere without seeing him. I suppose," she added, more discreetly, "he happens to be making the same little tour that we are. But I thought I just wouldn't introduce him. He's the kind of person that does fasten himself on so!"

It seems odd to me now, looking back, that neither then nor at any other time did I make actual acquaintance with Mr. Paul Nathan. I may confess that I hardly encouraged circumstances to give me this pleasure. Mr. Nathan was a piece in the game on whom I had no desire to lay an interfering

finger; besides, he might be depended upon to move automatically, poor young man! But I presently became so involved that I wonder how I was able to hold myself a mere spectator with such consistency, in so far as he was concerned. From the beginning he seemed to suspect me, to put it roughly, of taking a hand; I could feel it in his shy and distant scrutiny, in which, also, I thought I read now and then something like appeal. But. if he did see in me a person of influence, the idea of ingratiation never occurred to him; he left me to my own sense of what his humility and devotion might deserve. I own to finding in this a pathetic flattery, by which in moments of reflection I was not unmoved. At no time would I concede myself an arbiter, but to be regarded from such a point of view, even by this little man in articulo amoris, unsealed the founts of my sympathy.

Indeed, I had little to say to Emmeline herself: it was Mrs. Adams and I who oftenest discussed the complication. She, indeed, took a great deal more account of Mr. Nathan than did her daughter. Emmeline, I fancied, brushed him away very easily; she had heavier preoccupations. It was hers to settle the great question as to why her art was so little persuasive, and hers, also, to reconcile herself to the breaking every day of bread which she had neither earned nor paid for. Plainly, Nathan had been too easy a conquest; he represented nothing she had tried for or cared to count; perhaps his persistence irritated her in its mockery of another and unachieved success. But Mrs. Adams took him quite seriously, gave him by turns the character of an intolerable nuisance, a romantic difficulty and a beast of prey; and in every capacity she made the very most of Whatever else he was, it was plain that to Mrs. Adams he was an immense solace and resource; he took the edge off a bitter situation, and let her see herself the protecting parent, full of diplomacy and precaution. sometimes thought that she magni-

fied the necessity for these things. She talked of poor Mr. Nathan's fastening himself on, but no one could have been more easily shaken off. There was small difficulty in keeping him at arm's length; at a hint he became a mere speck on the horizon. was always there, but always, as it were, in retreat; so much so that Mrs. Adams would sometimes look furtively around for him, and I saw her once or twice actually inveigle him into some sort of advance, for the pleasure of manœuvring its futility. As to Miss Adams, she now and then put a point upon her indifference by taking a turn with him on the piazza, at which Mrs. Adams would look elaborately perturbed, and say, wish Emmeline wouldn't do that.

The first time she said it, I put a question which caused her to explain why Mr. Nathan's addresses were impracticable. It was not, really, quite clear; it did not quite explain itself. The young man, to look at him, certainly came short of ideal standards, but so, for that matter, did the young lady, if one applied other tests. There was the difference of race, but was it not possible that this might be balanced in the eyes of a maiden counterpart of Tommy Tucker, who sang for his supper? When Mrs. Adams said she wished Emmeline "wouldn't do that," these considerations were vaguely present with me.

"After all," I said, "why not?"

"Look at him!" cried Mrs. Adams, apparently at a loss which reason to seize on first.

"He isn't pretty," I returned, "but

he may be good."

"It isn't his appearance. He belongs to them." She nodded toward an opulent Hebraic group farther along the veranda.

"What else do you know about him?" I asked. "Does he come of decent

people?"

"He comes of decent Jews; wholesale furriers in Chicago. Money? Money to burn!"

I looked at her, thoughtfully.

"Money to burn," I repeated.

"Oh, well, that's slang; but the Nathans are a very rich family."

"Has he any education?" I asked.

"As far as that goes, he's a Harvard graduate. But you can't educate the

Jew out of him.'

"Oh, pray," I cried, "why should you wish to? I must tell you that two or three of the people I value most in this world are Jews, and it is precisely the Jew in them that I find most interesting and agreeable."

Mrs. Adams looked at me kindly. "I know, it's different in England," she said; "I guess they're different in your country. And, of course, you had Disraeli, the great Disraeli—"

"I've met charming Jews in your

country," I insisted.

"Well, maybe you have. And I don't say but what, as a community, they're as good as we are, as charitable and more moral, if it comes to that. But over here the Christians stick somehow to the old notion of not having anything to do with them, more than they can help."

"You are so progressive, too, in

some ways," I mused.

"We keep to ourselves and they keep to themselves," Mrs. Adams went on, earnestly. "Why, you've only got to look around you in this hotel. Do you ever see any mixing? Do you ever see a Jew and a Christian dancing together at the hops, or boating together, or even sitting together at the same table? Of course you don't. There's too many of them here this year," she added, lowering her voice, "too large a proportion. Next year it will be all Iews, and the year after it will be deserted. They hate having a place to themselves. Two or three hotels have been ruined that way, and I can see Mr. Humboldt's anxious about I believe he's given out that there isn't going to be room for any more. Emmeline," she called, as the pair turned near us, "I want my white wrap, dear. Will you go and get it for me?"

The young man laid upon Mrs. Adams a soft, impenetrable glance and lifted his hat, as Emmeline went lightly

upon her errand; then he strolled off in the direction of the lake. We watched his going. There was something in his marvelous capacity for receiving rebuffs—was it temperament, was it race. or was it just love?—that gave one an odd confidence in him. He walked with a student's slouch, his hands in his pockets, but invincible purpose expressed itself in his movementsmight have been written in his foot-I wondered if Mrs. Adams had the least idea of the sort of thing her prejudices would ultimately have to contend with.

"I'm pretty broad-minded," she said, as he disappeared; "I wouldn't pick out a Roman Catholic or a Unitarian for Emmeline to marry, but, if she wanted to, I wouldn't stand in the

way, either—but a Jew!"

A fit of coughing overtook her, and I lost the sectarian alternative; but a gesture of the hands conveyed it more fully than words. In the midst of it Emmeline arrived with the shawl, in which she quickly and carefully wrapped her mother. "For once," she cried, with tender reproach, "you did want it!"

By this time I had begun to think that Mr. Humboldt had no bite at all. A whole week had gone by, presenting not only the ballad evening that could be depended upon to take, but an evening of recitations, an evening of parodies in the manner of the music-halls, a Sunday evening of sacred song. performance was never any better or any worse; the form did not seem to Miss Adams could make the matter. tricks of Bernhardt as uninteresting as the score of Verdi, and to neither of them, on her lips, would Browning yield a line in mediocrity. She spread her own pale personality over everything; it was that, poor thing, which she offered nightly in ineffectual masquerade, with little airs of dignity and reserve that showed how painfully she guarded her treasure of self-respect. An understanding of the terms of the case seemed to have spread in the hotel, and it produced kindliness; Miss Adams's audiences were thin, but she was never quite without one. People said that, after all, the entertainer was doing her very best, and they listened as if this fact laid a compulsion on them.

Then—it was now the middle of July -arrivals began to multiply at Lake Onogo. The stages that met the morning and afternoon trains came back with four guests on a seat. Up out of the great cities they came, dusty and perspiring, to emerge from their rooms an hour later fresh and eager to discover the attractions of the place. The hotel was pervaded with new people, and there was no shyness in the way they took possession of it. The cottages were full, the annex was full, tents were put up in the grounds; it was said of Mr. Humboldt that he did not know which way to turn. When I met Emmeline Adams in the corridor, hurrying to her room and choking with sobs, I knew perfectly well which way he had turned.

I was on my way to the office to pay my weekly bill, and, as I went, I assumed the fierce implacability by which I had found it possible several times to approach the manager. Truculence he respected; a more ill-mannered scowl than his own would very nearly force a smile from him. I found him sitting there, corpulent, reflective, his lower lip pushed out and his hands hanging between his

"The clerk's gone out," I addressed him; "if you can't keep a clerk on the spot, I've got to pay you."

The great man slanted an eye on the justice of this, and nodded. "Can't ask you to carry your bill around all day," he said, and stretched out his hand for it.

"I see the Adamses have got what—you call 'the sack,' in this elegant country," I said, with an offensive frown.

"Madam, for over a week now those ladies have been occupying a room in this hotel that is worth to the company that owns it exactly ten dollars a day. You know, and they know, and I know, that they give no sort of

equivalent. I'm not certain they don't do harm. We've had a quiet lot so far, but I expect a flash party from N' York to-morrow night that aren't taking any by-bye songs at all. S'long as there was plenty of accommodation I let it go on; but now the rush's begun I want their room. It's a matter of business."

"It isn't any of mine," I said, sulkily, "but I should think she could get up tableaux and charades and amuse the children. There isn't a soul to do anything for them in this hotel. At the Bennett House they've got a kindergarten and a gymnasium."

"No; I guess not. I've promised the room, so it's no use. That young Nathan"—Mr. Humboldt bit his pen and eyed me consideringly—"I expect he'll be giving up his room, too, once they go."

"How do you know," I snapped, "that you aren't spoiling something?"

Mr. Humboldt looked at me quite good-naturedly. "Oh, no," he said; "you're all off there. Miss Emmeline isn't any star, but she don't have to take a thing like that."

"Perhaps she might do worse," I retorted.

"Oh, I suppose so; but I guess she don't think so." Mr. Humboldt turned to his books; I left him entering our transaction there.

The Adamses were to leave the following afternoon. A little plot came to me, by which the appearance of moral discomfiture should be visited upon the manager. The outcome of my little plot was a notice, pinned up on the dining-room door, that Miss Emmeline Adams would give on that date, by special request, a ballad evening, with two or three specified renderings. Among the new-comers was a member of the cabinet at Washington; he came with his party, and on his heels came all the new people and some of the old ones. Nor was it the least trouble to arrange with the hotel gardener for a sumptuous bouquet, which Mr. Secretary Beaumont was charmed to present, with the compliments of the guests of the hotel. It

made quite a little function and it went off very successfully. Emmeline caught a color out of it and looked absolutely pretty; Mrs. Adams perked and quirked on the piano-stool so happily that one sighed to think it should be for such a fleeting moment.

And the next day the stage left for the five o'clock train without the Adamses. As they had told me nothing about the manager's fiat, I could ask no questions and express no surprise. After dinner Emmeline played some little gay airs and the children danced. They should have been in bed, but they were American children and they had no ideas of that kind. They danced, with the most engaging grace, till half-past ten o'clock.

Next day there was a berry picnic for them, and Miss Adams took charge. The day after it rained, and some one said that Miss Adams and the children had retreated to the hay-loft. evening Mrs. Adams told me in confidence that Miss Emmeline had consented, at Mr. Humboldt's entreaty, to do something for the children. you mustn't think it has anything to do with our arrangement here," she emphasized; "we both insisted upon that. Emmeline supports herself and me by her art only; the evenings will go on just the same. My daughter, however she may rank, isn't a nursery governess. She amuses the children for her own pleasure—she's perfect with children.'

I thought I had done Mr. Humboldt serious injustice, and I found it difficult, for a day or so, to be rude enough to him to make sustained conversation possible.

The evenings did go on, but they were not quite the same. Sometimes an evening was boldly skipped, while Miss Adams was paddled about in the moonlight by one of the young men staying in the hotel. Mr. Nathan's cigar would then burn inscrutably in a dark corner of the veranda until her return. Sometimes the evenings shrank to the mere compass of a song or two. This tended immensely, of course, to the enlargement of the audience;

and the girl sang as if a cloud had been lifted from her—with spirit and spontaneity. But the thing that stood out was what her mother called her "perfection" with children. This, indeed, she had. The little things claimed her, captured her, swarmed about her. It was a triumph she had only to put out her hand to take. I thought I recognized a perception of this in the intelligent eyes of the little Jew, who took his chance oftenest, I noticed, with the children. She was certainly kindest to him at these times; once or twice she even let him help.

It was wonderful the way Emmeline and her mother expanded. One saw when they were buoyed up, even more than when they were cast down, how sweet their independence was. They were happy enough to coquette, Emmeline with the young men who taught her to golf, Mrs. Adams with the married ladies who rocked with her upon the veranda. I could not help saying one day to Mr. Humboldt that I was glad he had, after all, found a way to utilize Miss Adams's services. He looked at me with a kind of cynical compassion.

"You seem interested in those ladies," he said. "Can you keep a secret?"

"Why, yes," I replied, unguardedly. "Well, whatever they are, they ain't dead-heads any longer. Their board's paid as regular as yours is."

It flashed upon me. "By——?"
"By the sheeny. You're on to it.
It's too good to keep," he chuckled.
"But you needn't give it away. They don't know it, o' course."

"But how wrong!" I exclaimed.
"That poor girl——"

A shade of something like compunction passed over the manager's face. "It does seem playin' it kind of low on the girl," he said, "and old Mis' Adams, if she knew, she'd be as mad as a wet hen. But it's no use; I worked it all out with the Israelite—it can't be done any other way."

It was detestable, being in the secret, but I cannot deny that it did heighten the little comedy. It explained the

private satisfaction which enabled Mr. Nathan to go on living under the treatment he received, placing him at the same time still deeper in the Old Testament with his patience under affliction. He was easier to contemplate, with the guilty knowledge in mind, than the Adamses were. presented a spectacle so trying to the senses of humor, of justice and of compassion that I often hesitated over the restriction of my adventitious promise to the manager, feeling that so inferior a bond might well break in order to end such a distressing situa-What most held me back from telling the Adamses was the reasonable prospect that they would never Least of all were they likely to hear of it from their despised bene-He had every tag and sign of common little men, but he had also his inheritance of sensibility. It was impossible not to think, too, with sympathy, of the money sense of his race and the subtle joy it must impart to his weekly handing over of bank-notes, a delicious thrill of benefit applied that would be lacking to the coarser Christian palm. Whether I spoke or held my peace, I felt myself in no way justified; but silence was simpler, so I kept it, biting my lip.

So passed July and August, one day much like another, but all beautiful, all vivid with pictures of the untrimmed woods set in the sweet and marvelous air. People stayed on with unusual persistence; by the first of September we were, as Mrs. Adams put it, "one large, large family." should have said two, for the cleavage of the Jews and the Gentiles to themselves continued to the end. On both sides it was amiable and contained; there was never a sign in which one could read hostility, never a sign either in which one could read disintegration in the established order. The only atoms that could be called semi-detached and floating were Mr. Paul Nathan and myself, but he counting as a lover, and I as a foreigner, had little to say to the mass. A brilliant young Jewess I made especial friends

with threw upon the situation a light of history and philosophy for which I was indebted to her; but it was too much in the nature of theory to irradiate the Adamses or to be useful to this slight record. I noticed that, with all her broad-mindedness, she was inclined to cast the eye of pity upon Paul plain infatuation. Nathan's men," she said to me, calmly, "have seldom the desire to marry out of their own race. They have always taken such care of us that we are generally strong and healthy, and I believe they think we make, in a sense, better wives. We are more domestic. Lightly as we have come to wear the bonds of our religion, how often do you hear of a Jewish divorce?"

Then the deer-slaughter began. remember the splendid stag's head that adorned the office desk the day I went to pay my last bill. The clerk had shot the animal; it was his first victim and he was inordinately proud I do not shoot; neither, it seemed, did Mrs. or Miss Adams, for we found ourselves departing by the same train. I was going only as far west as Buffalo, thence to find my own flag again in the north. To accept Mrs. Adams's kind invitation to her home in Detroit, whither Emmeline was hastening to take up her classes again, would have been giving, I felt, too great a license to my curiosity, and putting, perhaps, too great a strain upon my sympathy. I desired immensely to know the end of the queer little drama, but I was equally disposed to skip the rest of its develop-I had an uncomfortable sense that I was already more involved than I had any sincere right to be, as far as the Adamses were concerned, and that I could not altogether depend upon the spectator's immunity, as far as Mr. Nathan was concerned. Once or twice already I had thought him on the brink of breaking it with an appeal; and that was something of which I stood in quite ridiculous dread, so had his wonderful reticence—up to dategained upon my nerves.

We left him behind us, however,

when the stage bumped away with us over the corduroy road through the woods, to catch the west-bound train. Mrs. Adams indicated that it was rather a relief. Even as she spoke, his tragic mask gleamed out at us from a thicket of raspberry-bushes, and he raised his hat in farewell. Mother and daughter exchanged glances, and I thought Emmeline's bow kinder, if more distant, than her usual recognition. Mrs. Adams and I occupied the back seat; in that privacy I soon learned that the night before the poor young man had, as Mrs. Adams put it, "staked his all" upon a single question. Before that, she conveyed to me, in nods and undertones, they had always managed somehow to stave off the critical issue, but that last night he had simply asked for his opportunity, and Emmeline, to bring matters to a definite close, had given it to him. Now, Mrs. Adams sincerely hoped, they might look forward to a little peace; no doubt the poor fellow hadn't intended to spoil their Summer, but he had none the less effectually done It seemed to me that he had given their Summer—at all events Mrs. Adams's—its one light and leading; but what I expressed, of course, was the usual conviction that such things were very "painful"—an attempt, quite ineffectual, to dismiss the subject.

The train was three-quarters of an hour late, and we had the little pineplanked waiting-room to ourselves. The sap was green in it—it still smelled of the forest; and a dead fawn under one of the benches stained the floor with its innocent blood and gave a pang to the picture of crude invasion of which we all formed a part. The clerk in the ticket-office coughed incessantly; Mrs. Adams turned an experienced ear toward the sound, and I remember her saying, as she handed Emmeline her pocket-book to buy the tickets, that the case must be very ad-"But it's the right air, it's vanced. the right air," she went on. "No doubt that's why he's here." She, poor lady, had benefited immensely by the right air; she had gained a stone in weight,

and almost, I thought, as I looked at her, placidly sitting there, an ounce or two in importance.

Emmeline came back, replacing the loose papers in their leather case. "What's this?" she asked. "You haven't opened it, mummy."

Apprehension shot into me, for I recognized the patriotic envelope of the hotel office. It might be anything, I told myself, but I did not like the look of it.

"Oh, that! It came from the office just as we were starting. Some little acknowledgment, I dare say, from Mr. Humboldt. Open it, dearie."

"Tear it up," I counseled, earnestly.
"It's the hotel advertisement, with Mr. Humboldt's photograph at the top. It's not worth looking at."

But Emmeline had opened it, and I saw, as she unfolded the sheet, that it was not the hotel advertisement. She stood looking at it with a face of surprise and just a dash of apprehension. "Why, it's a bill!" she exclaimed.

"A bill?" cried Mrs. Adams and I together. "Oh, then," I added, with relief, "it's only a mistake."

"A bill," continued Emmeline, "from the hotel, for seventy-five dollars and seventy-five cents for the week ending September the third—that's to-day. It must be a mistake!"

Her eye, traveling down the items, was caught and fixed at the bottom. "Received payment with thanks," she repeated, word by word, with a frown of non-comprehension, "per—per"—she looked at me with inquiring bewilderment, then suddenly whitened and sat down. Her mother tore the paper from her hands.

"Per P. N.!" cried Mrs. Adams; and we all sat silent about the exploded thunderbolt.

"It must be some mis——"

"It's no mistake," said Emmeline, with a kind of quiet fierceness, "except handing it to mother—that was the mistake. Or was it—?" she demanded, with a flash—"or did he intend us to know—to—to pay us out that way?" Her face burned with anger, but her mouth quivered.

"No, My indignation was prompt. absolutely no," I said. "How can you suspect him of such a thing!" But Emmeline's eye dwelt, fascinated, upon one item in the bill. "Look," she said to her mother; "the hire of the room in which we gave our farewell tea—to which we didn't invite him! You would give that farewell tea! to 'the people who had been kind to us'! Oh," she cried, with the tears running down her cheeks, "oh, good God!"

Emmeline!" "Emmeline! Adams deprecated, with a hand upon her daughter's arm. But the girl shook it off and presently began to pace the floor. She had dashed away her tears and taken hold of the thing; her face was a knot of concentration. Presently, she stopped in front of her mother. I can see her now, with her hands thrust into the pockets of her blue serge coat and the sharp lines of her knuckles showing through.

"I believe," she said, drily, "that this has been going on a long time. the light of it I understand a good many things."

"He couldn't have dared," replied

Mrs. Adams, weakly.

Emmeline took another turn and "He did came again to a standstill. dare. It began on the sixth of July, the day after Humboldt told us we'd have to go. Don't you remember how we wondered why he had changed his mind and what made him, all of a sudden, so polite? It was Paul Nathan's money. Mr. Nathan must have paid on our account—let me see"—she made a rapid calculation on the back of the bill-"five hundred and ninetyquite six hundred dollars. Six hundred dollars! Will you tell me where I am to get it?"

This, I saw, as she resumed her feverish pacing, was her whole preoccupation. In the misery of the disclosure she hardly felt its blow to her vanity; for the moment she did not see herself humiliated and ridiculous before the standards of her art. was wholly taken up with this impossible money obligation. I suppose my face expressed more compunction than I knew, and perhaps my silence was indiscreet, for suddenly she shot upon me the sharpest scrutiny I have ever had to sustain.

"You knew about this!" she cried. I thought she would have taken me by the shoulders. "You have known about it from the beginning!"

"I am sure she hasn't, dearie," put

in Mrs. Adams.

"And not told us one—single word-about it!" went on Emmeline, keeping me firmly under her glance. "And you call yourself a friend of ours!"

"I may be a friend of his," I said, defensively. "And I can tell you this, dear Miss Adams: I am quite sure he never intended you to know. It was an absolute secret; I only found it out by-by accident, and I had to promise not to tell. The more unkindly you treated him, the more anxious he would be to keep it from vou."

"You know nothing about him,"

she exclaimed, implacably.

"I know that," I said; "I am sure

of that."

"I think, dearie, our friend is just as likely as not right," put in Mrs. "You know she has an eye Adams. for character."

Emmeline fixed me as if my eye for character were precisely my most objectionable feature. "What right," she demanded, "what earthly right had he to meddle with our affairs?'

Before that I was dumb. could make lawful defense of such a

piracy of obligation?

"He only wanted to save you pain," I replied at last, weakly, "and—and inconvenience. He was trying to do it with the humble, obscure use of a few hundred dollars."

"His intentions were good, Emmeline," said her mother, thoughtfully, "and in a way, dear, I think it was nice of him."

Emmeline took two or three more turns and brought up squarely in front of the bench on which Mrs. Adams and I kept our dejected seats. addressed me, and I saw at once that my effort to occupy her with Mr. Nathan's motives had been, at least

for the moment, vain.

"I am going to ask you," she said, "to lend me that money. Yes, mother, I am. You'll have to excuse me and you must lend it to me. You ought to—you can see for yourself that you ought to, not having prevented it when you might. Yes, mother, I know the train is coming—there's plenty of time. I want her to promise now, before we go on board, or I'll go back in the stage and get some arrangement out of Humboldt."

I will admit at once that it was inconvenient, and, being inconvenient, I rather suspected that it was un-I had not six hundred reasonable. dollars to spare; I had not three—that is, to spare—without doing something I did not wish to do, or leaving something undone that I did wish to do. And it seemed, frankly, a great deal to pay for the indulgence I had permitted myself, the indulgence I have here described. It flashed upon me that Miss Adams's sense of proportion had somewhat failed her, and by the same flash I saw that everything had failed her, poor girl, except the sense of her own extremity. I cannot, therefore, claim it as even an amiable weakness by which I yielded and promised, in the set terms of her demand, before we boarded the smoking west-bound train, that she should have the money. She was very clear about my responsibility; it was really almost as if she levied damages upon me, collecting them with her own right hand, aided by my honest conscience; and practically all the gratitude was expressed by Mrs. Adams, from whom it came, however, with a blend of something that was not altogether approval. Long before I left the train Emmeline had worked out the plan upon which she intended to repay me by instalments. when she explained it in detail, it was plain that her mother listened without enthusiasm. "It is a pity, after all," Mrs. Adams said to me, confidentially, under the roar of the express, "that

we came to know anything about it." I, too, thought so, and, apart from the irony of my own complication, I had a real pang for Paul Nathan when he should handle the avenging cheque.

Emmeline's first and only communication upon the subject was put into my hands the following February. in a rose garden of Palermo. Among the half-dozen letters the little Italian waiter brought me it was the only one in an unfamiliar hand, and I remember looking at it with the frown which life lends us, after a while, for unfamiliar hands. And I remember the relief with which I saw from the signature that it brought me, after all, only a reference to an agreeable Summer that was past. The reference was brief, the letter as a whole was brief; and this was the more characteristic, as it was a letter of apology. The first instalment of the six hundred dollars was due, and Miss Adams wrote to say that she could not pay it, owing to increased expenses connected with mother's illness, which lately passed through an alarming phase. Mrs. Adams was better and sent her love, and Emmeline knew I would understand.

I hope I did understand, and I hope I wrote in terms which could not fail to relieve the poor girl of at least that anxiety, but no more letters came from her, and other things were more present with me; and long before Palermo had faded into Piccadilly the little history I have written here faded into the Summer it was set in. How it flashed out again in all its primeval colors when, toward the end of the season, arrived the communication that seemed to cut me off from it with curtness and finality!

It came in a long, gray business envelope, bearing the American stamp, and under my careless fingers its enclosure dropped out first. This enclosure was a draft upon an Anglo-American banking house for the sum of six hundred dollars, and it was

signed by Paul Nathan. The story was all there, in the signature, and I gave myself the thrill of making it out from that before unfolding the sheet upon which Mr. Nathan, in the crisp terms of commerce, discharged, with thanks, his wife's obligation. In his handwriting, also, was the address on the newspaper, about a month old, in which I found marked the obituary notice of Mrs. Charlotte Adams.

Pinned inside this was a letter addressed to me from Mrs. Adams herself:

DEAR FRIEND:

Emmeline has written to tell you that I have been very ill lately, but she does not know how ill. The mischief is now far advanced in my remaining lung and I may at any time be called away. I know my dear. Emmeline will have all your sympathy when this occurs, and I am not writing to ask it, but because I think I ought to let you know how completely my opinion of poor Mr. Nathan is changed. How careless are our judgments when in health and strength! I am now about to leave my dear daughter

alone and unprovided for in the world—my little pension dies with me—and she is far from strong. Her art will never suffice! On my death bed I intend to ask her to marry Mr. Nathan. She will not refuse her mother's last wish. She may convert him, but even if he remains a Jew he is a good, sterling man. I write to you because you were in our confidence last Summer, and I want to prevent any misunderstanding on your part should you hear of their marriage after I am gone. It will not be because I no longer influence her, but, on the contrary, at my express wish, and to enable me to pass away in peace. It is the best, the only course. Dear Emmeline could never entertain alone!

The story illustrates to me a remarkable case of a really triumphant American mother. Besides that, of course, it has its moral, from which, I think, with great confidence, we may pluck Mrs. Paul Nathan's happiness as well as her prosperity. The moral recites, with a certain candor, the only circumstances which offer the opportunity of permanent employment to an entertainer.



THE ENTREATY

YOU make me dream of gold asleep.
What strands await me, uncaressed?
What molten breaths, what heats unguessed
Are coiled for me, deep under deep.
And all the moons that were in me wake breathlessly and beam to you;
And all the seas that stir in me throb up, like stars, and stream to you.

You make me dream of white. No air
Was there upon your face or breast;
No storm, no hue, but only rest,
And grief went quiet as a prayer.

Troy leapt—it sank, and must again, and night brood on the meres of it;
Fierce Babylon is dust again, its kisses with the tears of it.

You make me dream of red. The room
Pulsed all about us, like a flame;
The hour! the voices—with them came
The crimson presages of doom.

O sweet, I want the whole of you—that gold which is a part of you, The dew which is the soul of you, the fire which is the heart of you!

RIDGELY TORRENCE.

A LA PENSION

YOU—seated at the harp below—
Play ballads borrowed out of France;
I—leaning where the roof is low—
I listen in a lazy trance.
I have been reading—well, romance:
Un conte par Daudet, fresh and green
With Provence people in a dance
And poplar shadows in between.

You—trill of love; a chansonette
Sung under windows in the street;
I—dreaming over books, forget
The smooth soprano, silver-sweet—
Forget, and wander some retreat
Of tangled terrace, broken bust;
Of arches where the winds repeat
A trouvère's carol o'er his dust.

Ah, well, we both are far away—
(I in the attic, you below).
We wander Provence, harvest day;
Or Paris when the cafés glow.
I know you not—you come and go—
I meet you sometimes on the stair;
A fellow-boarder, true—but, no!
The world has settled our affair.

And yet—your voice, my book and—France!
These somehow wish us to be friends;
These whisper over old romance
And fairy plots with happy ends.
Ah, no! I babble—fate forfends.
That chanson—that is all of you.
Full better take what fortune sends
Than part a slender purse in two.

HARRISON S. MORRIS.

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AN OLD GRIEVANCE

SHE—I remember when the Bickertons were married; must be twenty years ago.

HER HUSBAND—And they haven't forgiven each other yet!

LIFE

By Madison Cawein

PESSIMIST

THERE is never a thing we dream or do

But was dreamed and done in the ages gone;

Everything's old; there is naught that is new,

And so it will be while the world goes on.

The thoughts we think have been thought before; The deeds we do have long been done; We pride ourselves on our love and lore And both are as old as the moon and sun.

We strive and struggle and swink and sweat, And the end for each is one and the same; Time and the sun and the frost and wet Will wear from its pillar the greatest name.

No answer comes for our prayer or curse, No word replies though we shriek in air; Ever the taciturn universe Stretches unchanged for our curse or prayer.

With our mind's small light in the dark we crawl, Glow-worm glimmers that creep about, Till the Power that shaped us, over us all Poises His foot and treads us out.

Unasked, He fashions us out of clay, A little water, a little dust, And then in our holes He thrusts us away, With never a word, to rot and rust.

'Tis a sorry play with a sorry plot,
'This life of hate and of lust and pain,
Where we play our parts and are soon forgot,
And all that we do is done in vain.

OPTIMIST

There is never a dream but it shall come true, And never a deed but was wrought by plan; And life is filled with the strange and new, And ever has been since the world began. As mind develops and soul matures, These two shall parent Earth's mightier acts; Love is a fact and 'tis Love endures Though the world make wreck of all other facts.

Through thought alone shall our Age obtain Above the Ages gone before; The tribes of sloth, of brawn, not brain, Are the tribes that perish, are known no more.

Within ourselves is a voice of Awe, And a hand that points to Balanced Scales; The one is Love and the other Law, And their presence alone it is avails.

For every shadow about our way There is a glory of moon and sun; But the hope within us hath more of ray Than the light of the sun and the moon in one.

Behind all being a purpose lies, Undeviating as God hath willed: And he alone it is who dies Who leaves that purpose unfulfilled.

Life is an epic the Master sings, Whose theme is man and whose music, soul, Where each is a word in the Song of Things, That shall roll on while the ages roll.



A SELLER

PLAYWRIGHT—I have here a German tragedy.

Manager—Don't want it!

PLAYWRIGHT-I was about to add, translated, adapted, dramatized, condensed, arranged and set to rag-time by myself.

Manager—I'll take it, sir; pray name your own terms.



UNFORTUNATE

LERK—Great Scott! I gave that man who was in here five minutes ago some of this poison by mistake!

DRUGGIST—How careless you are! That's the most expensive poison we've got in the shop.

THE DESCENT OF MAN

By Douglas Story

T was the hour of the half-light the hour when man's mind roams indiscriminately between thoughts of the immensity of the cosmos and the need of dressing for dinner. Major the Honorable Chester Methuen settled himself more comfortably into the padded luxury of his club chair and idly eyed the last of the homeward procession from the Park. It was early May, and the victorias still glistened with their

fresh Spring varnish.

From his hand dangled a mailed copy of the Morning Post, and in fancy he wandered eastward to the corner of that other Park his education had taught him was the hub of the social universe. What did he here, gazing out at a triangle bounded by overgrown hotels and the exotic château of a Vanderbilt? Methuen frowned as he put the question, but smiled as the conviction was forced upon him that the answer was the eternal one—cherchez la femme.

It was true he had crossed the Atlantic, had given up his Winter's hunting, had allowed his yeomanry troop to go the second time to South Africa without him, for the sake of a woman. for a democratic chit of a girl who was as unattainable that evening as she had been when first he met her at Lady Courtenay's, eight months before. He turned angrily to the newspaper in his hand. An observant servant turned on the electric light above his head, and there, displayed before him, was the immediate cause of his irritation.

The Earl and Countess of Cliveden have arrived in town for the season.

That meant brave doings in Belgrave Square, because neither his brother's income nor his inclination was of the kind that stints hospitality. Methuen growled an anathema and tore the wrapper from another paper on his knee. It was the World, and he glanced lazily over its columns. Everybody he knew, and many he had forgotten, were hastening to London. Town houses, that for a generation had blinked near-sightedly through shaded windows, had shaken the scales from their eyes and were smiling gladly out upon the world again. Town was blithe with the laughter of girls, gay with the smiles of fair women; and he sat alone in New York, love-sick and forlorn!

Even the World had something to say of his desertion:

Of the young men who have not gone to the war and yet are absent this season the most notable is the Honorable Chester Methuen, brother of the Earl of Cliveden. heir of his mother, he is one of the most eligible of present-day Englishmen, yet has he mysteriously withdrawn himself westward, and for the last three months has lived a hermit's life in America. His speedy return is ardently desired by a large circle of friends in Mayfair.

"Damn their desires!" muttered Methuen, irritably, as he threw the paper from him. "One would think I was a scratched favorite for the Derby or a racing yacht out of commission."

"Hello, Methuen, got le vin triste? You look as if L. & N.'s had dropped ten points. What's the matter?"

He was a well-groomed man, fresh from Fifth avenue, who hailed him. Methuen grunted in reply, but made no articulate answer. Instead, he hit the bell a sharp rap and turned to his

interrogator.

"Have a cocktail? It's the one good thing that has come out of this disgustingly new world of yours—and even it was stolen from the Phœnicians."

The New Yorker laughed, and

joined in the order for Martinis.

"My dear Methuen, there is no new world, but there are many good things in this old one of ours. Just look out there and tell me if you know anywhere—out of Budapest—such a throng of good-looking women?"

"Oh, yes; good enough to look upon, but ashes upon the lips when you come to taste of them."

"Noli os tangere, then—it's your

family motto, isn't it?"

Englishman started The "With all due deference to frowned. the Latin of my ancestors and the heraldry of his grace the earl marshal, it is—but that's just what I detest about you Americans. When a Britisher happens among you, you at once measure him by Burke, con over his clubs and his country places, commit to memory his female relations and get a working idea of his coat of arms. Good God, why can't you take a man for himself-so long as he pays his hotel bills and doesn't use a New York tailor? I tell you, I know quite respectable people at home who haven't the dimmest idea of the difference between a field azure and a countercharged she-dragon; but I don't know one woman in America who can't rattle off my style and arms as though she were a railway porter at a junction."

"Well, my dear sir, it's all evidence of education—and the enterprise of the publishers of peerages. Just look at the intelligence of our women, at their grasp of affairs! Just think for a moment of the difference between a New York dinner-table and one in London, and tell me which is on the higher plane?"

"Higher plane be damned! Your American woman knows less of more

things than any other human being living. You take a woman in to dinner—she rhapsodizes over Fritz Kreisler's high C, over Marcius Symons's tone allegories, over Maeterlinck's mysteries and the soul-destroying effect of Christian Science, before you've swallowed your soup. But she doesn't know the alphabet of art any more than she understands the elements of religion. She's got the acquisitive genius of the magpie with the blatant volubility of the parrot. I tell you, I'm tired of the American woman and all her ways!"

"May I tell that to Margaret Ham-

ilton?"

Methuen flushed and his hands clenched in anger. His voice was very cold and deliberate as he replied: "Pardon me, I never apply general laws to individual cases. Thank God, even in America there are exceptions to every rule."

The other realized it were better to change the conversation, so he rose, glanced at the clock, and remarked, "Well, I'm off to dress. Good-bye, Methuen. Where are you dining tonight?"

"Sherry's."

"So am I. See you later?"

Methuen followed him out to the Avenue and cursed himself for a fool for his irritation. Education, after all, counted for little when generations of self-repression could not reconcile him to the presence of a woman's name upon another's lips. He realized that something in the high-bred chivalry of his nature shrank from the extreme candor of the modern pose. Man of the world, he was yet sentimentalist enough to hold his heart lock-fast, to deem his love for a woman a sacred trust, inviolable.

On his way down the Avenue he formed a resolution. He would demand an answer from Miss Hamilton and by it would he guide his steps—to London and the season, or to Newport and his bride-elect.

Other men than Methuen would have felt less of hesitation in putting their claims to the test. Worshiped

at Hurlingham and Ranelagh as a polo-player, he was known throughout the shires as a daredevil rider to hounds. He had played cricket for his school and his county, and, in a safe of his London bankers', were the D. S. O. he had won under Kitchener in the River Campaign and the C. B. his sovereign had given him for his work with the first contingent in South Africa. It is true he had no title, but he had youth and health and fortune. His father had been an earl and his mother a countess, as were his brother and sister-in-law to-day. All of these he had to his credit; but Chester Methuen loved too well to believe that aught but the man within him would avail much with Margaret Hamilton. Toward that personality he bore less of good will than did the world at large.

That night at dinner he saw, from his seat at the right of his hostess, Margaret Hamilton mightily amused by the talk of the man from the club, and cursed himself still more for the naïveté of his generalizations. His own table found him heavy and distraught.

"I see the London World bemoans your absence, Major Methuen," remarked his hostess, seeking to rouse him.

"I hate public lamentations, Mrs. Mostyn, and I loathe the society press. When old women controlled the world of gossip they made mischief; now the newspapers invent it."

"True; but we don't believe it, and, besides, only our maids read it."

"I admit that; but then your maids retail it to you again while they're busy with your hair, or your manicure magnifies it."

Mrs. Mostyn shrugged her shapely shoulders and smiled. "My dear major, it's all a sign of the times. The troubadours have passed, and their place has been taken by chic manicures and anecdotal masseuses. What would you? They're less metrical, but quite as imaginative as any minstrel of the Middle Ages. Besides, they've got so much better opportunity of gauging what we really wish to know than those picturesque tat-

tlers with the clam shells in their hats ever had! Now, we've all been dying to know what brought you over here, and only this afternoon my nailwoman whispered something to me about your taste in hair. She says you like it Du Barry. Are you very hard hit, major?" She leaned toward him as though to search out his heart.

"Could I have lived three months with a mortal wound and yet have escaped the notice of your manicure?"

"Ît's possible. Since Cupid exchanged his bow and arrows for a Mauser pistol a man may walk about for months with a bullet in his heart and not know it. Moreover, you're distinctly flagging. You're growing absolutely stupid."

"Change of climate and too many dinners—sort of fatty degeneration of

the intellect."

"Strange, isn't it, that you aristocrats credit yourselves with intellects nowadays and are not ashamed?"

"I suppose it's because we live by them."

Mrs. Mostyn's eyebrows rose a full half-inch. "Heavens, major! And your brother's the seventeenth Earl of Cliveden?"

"He's the busiest stock-broker in Throgmorton street, and his countess has a ready-made hat-store somewhere off Oxford street."

"Himmel! And you still account yourself an aristocrat? Really, one can say the rudest things nowadays; isn't it delightful?"

"Not at all. But you see, Mrs. Mostyn, aristocrats are like poets—they're born, not made. You American have forgetten that"

cans have forgotten that."

"H'm! We're trying to live up to it. I never heard, though, that stockbrokers were products of nature. Hasn't your brother a partner or something?"

"Yes; Mucklewaim—the son of my father's Scotch gardener. The firm is 'Mucklewaim & Methuen.'"

"Sounds like a minstrel combination! Is Mr. Mu-Mu-quel-qu'un the brains of the co-partnery?" "No; he keeps the books and signs the cheques. My brother does the

thinking."

"Bless my soul! Thank you, major; a little brandy—I felt giddy for the moment. Let us talk of something less revolutionary, please. By the way, what did bring you to America?"

"The study of democracy."

"Good heavens! and you're wasting your time in the United States! Really, major, you do little credit to our intelligence. However," as she dipped her fingers in the water, "we can forgive you many things for the sweet pleasure of your company. Shall we go?"

As they passed the place at which Miss Hamilton sat he heard her remark: "No, you can no more carve the élite out of a family tree than you can mould it out of dollar bills. I have no use for coronets that are merely brewers' trade-marks. Give me the man the gods father, untarnished with trade, unsullied with servitude, and I'll acclaim him noble."

Methuen heard and marked the flash of her eye, the haughty poise of her head in the table light. He wondered what answer might await him on the morrow, and, wondering, passed outward to his auto-Victoria.

H

The course was beautiful in the pale Spring morning, delicate and inviting. Margaret Hamilton emphasized its fragile charm by the radiance of her beauty. Her coloring was Autumnal, of the poppy rather than of the primrose, yet was she no wise at feud with the landscape. She did not blend with the simple whites and tender greens, but she stood out from them and dominated them, triumphant. The rich coils of her russet hair held the attention, the gentle birches and alders yielding her place. She seemed a very Cleopatra unsoftened yet by Antony.

Chester Methuen was a goodly man on a golf-course, broad-shouldered, fine-flanked, spare-ankled, lithe and muscular. He paired well with Margaret, although his fair complexion left to her the predominance in the color scheme.

It was not till they had reached the far green that their conversation veered from the topical to the personal. Methuen was determined to redeem his vow, to put his fortunes to the test. Margaret was sublimely innocent, intensely golfish.

Methuen opened with a characteristic generalization: "American women grace a golf-course; English women never replace the Turf."

"You mean—in their husband's af-

fections?"

"Not necessarily—some husbands have no affections. I mean one has to come to America to find the graceful woman—graceful on the ball floor and on the teeing ground. Grace, with us, went out with the minuet, and we never took to the two-step—but that's not what I started to say. I'm going home to England."

Margaret was leisurely building a tee to her pleasure; Chester's remark sounded inane, plebeian. She glanced up at him from the platform.

"Really? Not before we finish the

round, I hope?"

Methuen looked down at her where she crouched like a lioness on some tawny Abyssinian desert. His face was firm of a set purpose.

"Miss Hamilton, I love you. I have loved you ever since I met you in London last season. I came to America to claim you. I ask you now

whether you will marry me."

Margaret knelt beside her ball, letting the gray sand trickle noiselessly through her fingers, the while he spoke to her. When Methuen asked her to marry him she started as though he had lashed her; her hand closed tight on the moiety of sand remaining, her lips clenched and her jade eyes gleamed balefully. Methuen marveled at her resemblance to the lioness he had pictured her.

She rose slowly and deliberately and faced him.

"Sir, the tempo of your language smacks rather of the parade ground than of romance. Still, as I understand you, you are making love to me?"

"I am asking you to be my wife."

"Then, sir, I deem your request an insult. Fore!"

Her caddie sprang upright on the knoll where he had lain sunning himself, startled out of his somnolence by the imperiousness of her summons. Methuen bent forward as she addressed the ball. There was no formality about his speech or his actions now. He gripped her wrists and held her while the words hissed out from him.

"For God's sake, Margaret, stop! Think what this means to me—to us both. I love you, I tell you—love you. When I met you in London I thought you the most beautiful creature I had ever seen. When I crossed the ocean to join you the engines sang, night and day, 'Mar-gar-et! Mar-gar-et!' Here, in New York, for three months I have dined and danced and driven in the Park to be near you. I have thought of no other woman since our first meeting, save you—and now you call my offer of marriage an insult! Why?"

His voice vibrated with the intensity of his passion, but Margaret remained stolid, emotionless. When he paused for reply she spoke quietly, evenly.

"Major Methuen, you hurt my

Chester made no movement to alter his grip. He repeated his query.

"Why?" The teeth met in her lower lip. It was the old contest of will—the eternal struggle between male and female. He went on: "I love you. In my own land I have family and position. I have a fortune that even Wall street cannot sneer at. I am but thirty-two, and there is nothing in my past need shun the light of day. Why, Margaret, why?"

At the sudden mockery of her answer he staggered: "I am determined not to ally myself with trade. It's the curse of our modern life—necessary; perhaps, yet a curse, as work is.

It has killed chivalry, gallantry, romance. I understand certain members of your family are engaged in trade. Well, I shall never marry any one associated with it, or with them. I shall have no cash-registered aristocrat for husband! I demand a peer of Bayard and du Guesclin, otherwise do I remain a maid and a democrat!"

She spoke as tragedy queens were wont to speak, then turned away from the tee and strolled over to a windblown bush and seated herself there. Chester gazed blankly after her, then followed, groping as a blind man might. She was marvelously beautiful embowered in lilac, and Methuen's heart yearned to her.

"Margaret," he moaned, and his voice was full of an infinite despair, "Margaret, is this some grizzly jest? Am I so little to you, that you can see in my protestation only an object for laughter, a butt for ridicule? God, girl, do you know what it means to a man to lay his heart bare before you, to expose his very soul to you?" Methuen's voice was strong and hard now, the voice of a man resentful. Margaret sat very still, rhythmically tapping the toe of her tiny tanned shoe with the head of her driver.

"I beg your pardon, Major Methuen; I merely said I was determined not to marry into a family engaged in trade."

"But, heavens! my father was the sixteenth Earl of Cliveden! Ever since the Norman landed my people have been law-makers and leaders in war. What on earth do you mean?"

"I mean nothing against the dead—let them rest in Westminster Abbey or Cliveden Cathedral. The past is—the past. I am dealing with the present. Isn't your brother a stockbroker and your sister-in-law a maker of impossible straw hats? I hate trade, I detest traders—I long for the chivalry, the sentiment, the national pride that of old made men die for their country. You cannot find that across a counter."

The tension on Methuen's face broke and a smile swept over it, a happy, boyish smile. Margaret marked the ripple of his laugh and realized his mouth was very appetizing. The beat of the driver upon her shoe slackened off into a contemplative rallentando. Her head drooped for the first time that morning.

"What are you laughing at?" Her

mouth was pouting now.

"At the eternal feminine and her ineradicable inconsistency. You are a patriot, are you not?"

"I am an American."

"Same thing! Well, Margaret, listen to me while I explain the mystery of my brother's trade relations." He was sitting on the grassy bank beside her, now, and the girl's tattoo had lapsed into silence. She looked up for a moment with the laughter lighting her eyes.

"My interest concerns your trade relations, not your brother's. Are

there others?"

"Sit still, and listen! Like you, my brother is a patriot—it's a family failing; my great-grandfather lost his head through it—he has been greatly concerned with the development of American trade, as have all Englishmen, and he has set himself to curb it. Now, in the old days, my people did their part in building up an Empire—and they did it not so badly, considering the meager little island they started out with; so they were prime ministers in England, viceroys in India, commanders-in-chief in Canada—and the result is the British Empire."

Margaret's hand stole into Chester's

and rested there.

"Well, to-day, these things are done by such men as Chamberlain and Kitchener and those fellows—they don't need us any longer as Empire managers; the work's easy now. So my brother and the best of the nobility are setting themselves to fight you in trade—it's the modern battle-field and England's chivalry is needed where her peril is greatest. Consequently, the Earl of Cliveden sells Union Pacifics, and the countess designs straw hats for the million. Noblesse oblige, ma chérie, now as heretofore."

He drew the girl's yielding body over to him and kissed her long and tenderly. The driver dropped from her hand and a soft, warm arm stole

round his neck.

"Oh, Chester!" she murmured into his neck, "I knew it must be all right; but why, dear heart, have you waited so long to tell me? We might have been so happy."

When they rose to go, the caddie was dancing a war-dance on the knoll. Margaret blushed, and Methuen threw a golf-ball at him. A gentle, restraining hand stretched out to the enraged

Englishman.

"And please, Chester, will you promise never again to say that an American woman knows less of more things than any other being?"

The lioness was pleading now, Cleopatra hungering for her Antony.

"Oh, ho!" laughed Methuen.
"That's where the shoe pinches! No, child; I used to think the road to an American woman's love was via her throat by virtue of candies, but now I know it rests upon her lips, and—she knows more of one thing than any other woman living!"

The screen of lilac was a sadly inefficient protection against an experienced caddie's gimlet eyes. But two people were happy, and the world has greater need of happiness than lovers

of covert.



HOW THEY ARE KEPT

MISS DE STYLE—He said I was a little flower that he intended to keep.

MISS GUNBUSTA—I noticed him pressing you.

EARTH'S WEARIEST

By Theodosia Garrison

TWAS God in heaven who spake to Death Who stood beside His knee, "Oh, lover of all men that live, Whose arms clasp land and sea, Find thou on earth the weariest soul And bear it swift to me."

It was God's messenger who went Swift-footed on his way; Like flame he crossed the rim of night, Like shadow crossed the day, And as he passed the glad dead smiled As soothed children may.

It was God's messenger who sped
Like blown wind through the spheres,
Across the little paths of earth,
With feet that no man hears.
He reached the portal of that place
That is the House of Tears.

It was God's messenger who stood
And watched with pitying eyes
The burning tears of those who wept,
Who heard the broken sighs
Of men who cried aloud their griefs
And mourned their miseries.

It was God's messenger who spake:
"Not theirs the gift I bring.
Behold, the sorrow that is said
Becomes a little thing;
And there is solace in man's tears
That is God's comforting."

It was God's messenger who went
The little ways of earth.
The red moon smouldered in the clouds
Like fire upon a hearth,
And lo! he came unto that place
That is the House of Mirth.

It was God's messenger who heard
The laughter and the cheer.
The wine was red upon the board,
The lights burned high and clear,
And one laugh rang above the rest
That joyed men's hearts to hear.

It was God's messenger who heard One voice above the rest— She who was gayest in the song And quickest with the jest, And lo! he saw the broken heart That ached within her breast.

It was God's messenger who bent
And touched her tenderly;
"Great is the anguish of a smile
That shows where grief should be,
And awful are the unshed tears
That never man may see."

It was God's messenger who spake
The word that no man saith;
It was the poor soul in his arms
That smiled in her last breath,
"Strove I not well—how didst thou know
I was so weary, Death?"



THE MAIN QUESTION

BRAMBLE—My wife and I were playing ping-pong last night, when the ball flew into a gas flame and exploded, set fire to the window curtains and nearly burned the house down.

THORNE—Who won the game?



GOOD ADVICE

HE-I can't seem to stick to anything.

SHE-Try sitting on fly-paper.



A HENPECKED HUSBAND

HEWITT—Do you believe in the equality of the sexes? JEWETT—I'd like to, but my wife won't let me.

THE VIRTUOSITY OF MR. BENJAMIN

By Fletcher Cowan

R. BENJAMIN did not take up the piano until the age of sixty, yet at sixty-one he became the most remarkable virtuoso of his time. One year, in which not only to attain but transcend the skill that had demanded of others the application of a lifetime—this was the phenomenon that held the world spellbound and made the critics reel aghast.

It all started in a department-store. Mrs. Benjamin wished to purchase some hangings for the drawing-room, and, much against his will, took Mr. Benjamin with her, to confer with him so that she might select the opposite of whatever happened to please him.

Having achieved her purpose, she swept off to the silk-department, leaving Mr. Benjamin, as usual, to go home That day, however, it happened that her husband was in a leisurely mood, so he took to wandering about the upholstery and furniture sections of the place, with much the same air of inconsequence that characterized his morning constitutional in the Park. Somehow, the glamour of the great department-store had taken hold of him. Home-staying in his habits, his opportunities for keeping in touch with the gigantic strides of modern business came seldom, and, on this particular day, he felt like making more of the occasion.

Suddenly, he found himself strolling through a suite of sumptuously furnished rooms. He was in a corner flat on Riverside Drive, and outside the windows the snow was falling. Every modern luxury was contained in the apartments: electric lights, hardwood floors, rugs, hangings, brica-brac and a real bathtub, with running water.

He sat down on a divan and studied the mimic scene with pleasurable wonderment, as though he were in a theatre. His only critical look was

directed at the draperies.

"I like the ones I've just selected better," he murmured. Then he sighed. "Ah! how will Miranda ever get on without me! A woman is so dependent on the judgment of a man." He looked around again. "How charmingly homelike!" he thought, and hearing a piano playing somewhere, he called an attendant and asked: "Is there an adjacent flat?"

"No, sir; the operator is giving his morning recital on the diapasonola in

the lyrium, yonder."

Mr. Benjamin at once gravitated toward the lyrium. The selection was The neutral-hued from "Parsifal." concert chamber was illuminated softly with opalescent lights. Many people were there, listening reverentially to the music and holding packages which varied in the character of their proportions all the way from a delft clock down to a yard of drab waist-lining. A rather businesslike young man was sitting before the instrument. Music, apparently, came so naturally to him that he was able to produce it without palpable effort. He might have been the conductor of a trolley car, so obliviously did he seem to sweep through the schema of it all. But the music was great and everybody seemed to feel it so, and most of all Mr. Benjamin. At the close of the selection every one

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rose and pressed forward toward the instrument. Earnest questions were asked of the operator.

"Do you mean to say that you have not been playing on the real piano?"

"I have been playing on the real piano, madam, but indirectly, through an agency," was the reply. "The diapasonola is a mechanical device, attached to the piano proper. You see, it may be placed or pulled away at pleasure. This perforated paperroll is the music-sheet, which is set in, so. On operating the foot-board, the music at once begins. An intricate series of wind-valves are set in motion and these act on a series of felt hammers, which strike the keys of the piano proper, just as the human fingers would."

"How wonderful! And can any-

body play it?"

"A child can play it. A fly could, if its muscular gear were strong enough."

"Then no skill at all is necessary?"

"Without understanding a single note of music, you can play the most intricate masterpieces with the diapasonola. Therefore, literally, no technical skill is necessary. But the remarkable point is that musical skill is by no means debarred. The diapasonola has a technique of its ownthe technique of expression—which gives every player the opportunity of exercising his own individuality. you see this row of push-buttons here, marked allegro, moderato, adagio, and so forth? Do you see this switch and its dial arc, with measurements from pianissimo to forte, and the pedal lever? All these things permit you to regulate the tempo and the volume of the music you are playing, so that you may give it the color of your own individual feeling."

"What was the last number that you

played, sir?"

"'Parsifal."

"Does the instrument play coon-

songs just as well?"

"Just as well;" and the operator obligingly took out the Wagner music and did a delicate morceau in synco-

pated rag-time. Mr. Benjamin stood listening like one entranced.

At the conclusion of the cottonfield sonata, the operator rose and said in a very clear, across-the-hall tone:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the preliminary illustrations with the diapasonola being finished, we now come to the regular morning lecture. The subject to-day will be 'How to Listen to the Music of the Future.' Before the lecture there will be an intermission of ten minutes, during which visitors are free to further investigate the diapasonola, or regale themselves at the samovar in the palm-room."

Most of the audience went immediately to the palm-room. Mr. Benjamin approached the operator.

"Do you mean to tell me that I can play those things as you did?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Benjamin looked about him timidly. The concert-chamber was almost deserted. He sat down and the operator started him off on a Liszt

Hungarian rhapsody.

As the first notes came bounding forth, Mr. Benjamin's eyes began to gleam at the thought that the harmonies he heard were actually being produced by himself, who had never before touched a piano in his life. As the music went on and its dash and bizarrerie became intensified, he became positively excited and finally, stopping short, stood up and cried:

"I'll take one of these!"

The operator immediately produced his order-pad. "Name, please? Where delivered? Oak or rose-wood? You leave the selection of the musicrolls to us? Have you an account here? Thanks. Delivery on Wednesday."

Mr. Benjamin lingered for a moment, with the nervous feeling of a man who had done something that was beyond the empire of his own volition.

"Have you lost anything, sir?" asked the operator, seeing him feeling

absently in his pockets.

"My handkerchief. Oh, here it is! That exercise worked me up consider-

ably," said Mr. Benjamin, as he wiped his face.

"You have a musical temperament, sir," observed the operator, as he escorted him toward the elevator.

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Mr. Benjamin had intended the instrument as a birthday surprise for He had once spent a fortune on the musical education of an only daughter, feeling what a source of delight it would be, when he and Miranda were older, to have their gifted child sit and play for them of evenings. But he had not figured on the human accident of things. Edith married and played her music for another man. Mт. Benjamin reasoned, therefore, that the diapasonola would bring himself and his wife some compensation for the pleasure that had been wrested from them by the force of circumstances.

The instrument was brought into the house successfully, while Mrs. Benjamin was absent at an afternoon The man, sent with it, attached it to the piano, tested it and left. But Mr. Benjamin became so restless awaiting the return of his wife that he determined to try it. He selected from the music-rolls the overture to "Zampa," took his seat on the stool, inserted it and started off. Soon he found himself making breaks in the music, due to his halting pressure on the foot-board. Then he became aware that he was gradually receding from the instrument. The foot-work was pushing him in the direction of the street. The stool gathered up the rug; the rug gathered up a tabouret holding an exquisite bit of Satsuma. There was a fall in Satsuma, and Mr. Benjamin, gathering up the pieces, stowed them behind the piano, murmuring, "Servants are so careless!" Then he respread the rug and started in again to master the technique of physical equipoise, this time holding on to the instrument with both hands. For a while the

whole thing looked like a dry shipwreck, the musical instrument being the raft and Mr. Benjamin the castaway, minus the rope-lashing. At last, however, the power of man conquered and, as soon as Mr. Benjamin was able to confine himself and the instrument to playing in one room, he took up music, per se. After studying the labels of all the music-rolls, he selected Rubenstein's "Kammenoi-Ostrow." The choice was a felicitous The delicate moderato opening began at once to intoxicate him and he felt affoat among the clouds of fantasy, a feeling he had never known before. Concluding this, he next determined to test the solidity of the firmament with the vorspiel to the "Flying Dutchman." He opened splendidly, and the fact that he, who had never touched a piano before, was able to produce such a whirlwind of consecutive tone-thunder almost carried him out of himself and left him panting at the incomprehensibility of the The strain was nervous as thing. well as physical. He rose and lighted a cigar. Smoking with rapid puffs, he paced up and down the room, excitedly.

"Is it possible?" he cried. "Am I, after all, a genius? It must be. I have heard music played before, but never have I heard it played as I have played it. They are right in every claim they make about this instrument. Though it be a mechanical contrivance, the player can still assert his individuality through it; can even assert it all the more."

He remembered Emerson's defense of Shakespeare against the charge of having appropriated the subject matter of his plays. Emerson had argued well when he contended that Shakespeare's thefts of theme had been a blessing for mankind. They had left his genius free for the treatment of the theme, instead of hampering him with its invention. So with music; an instrument like the diapasonola would do away with its exaction of a lifetime's drudgery in finger-work and leave the soul of man free to consider it.

spiritual interpretation. A new age was dawning, an age which had opened with the poetization of the mechanical. Musical study would become obsolete or relegated to the ranks of clerical work, along with type-writing. Of course, composers would always be necessary, until a machine was invented to supplant them; and, in the boundlessness of his optimism, Mr. Benjamin considered this by no means impossible.

Having by this time recovered sufficiently from the dynamics of Wagner, Mr. Benjamin took up the "Peer Gynt" suite of Grieg, and was playing down into the pedaldom of the "Hall of the Mountain King," when his wife en-

tered.

"Joseph!" she cried. "Have you

taken leave of your senses?"

"Don't be precipitate in your conclusions, my dear," answered Mr. Benjamin. "There is a surprise in store for you on your birthday—the revelation of a genius in your husband that you never dreamed of, which this instrument has awakened from its dormancy!"

III

MR. BENJAMIN possessed one of the most important attributes of genius—faith in himself. That evening he played for his wife with an instantaneous mastery of the instrument that fascinated her. She scarcely heard the music. What held her interest was the forceful manner in which her hitherto impersonal husband asserted himself in a field that had been utterly strange to him.

"What will Edith say when she hears you, dear?" she said.

He did not answer, absorbed as he was in the fervor of reeling off a Chopin nocturne. When he arose, it was like one who has gone through some great emotional effort; and, crossing the room, he looked at himself in the mirror.

"I spoke to you, Joseph," observed

his wife, remindingly.

"Yes; I think I heard you, dear. But never be surprised if I do not immediately answer you. The musical nature has its peculiarities."

Mr. Benjamin soon began to give his time entirely to music. He sometimes played as late as three o'clock in the morning, unaware of the unseasonableness of the hour, until the tenants of the apartment-house made it known to him through the medium of the proprietor. The oblivious rhapsodist received the hint with scorn.

"Miranda," he said, "my music is above these people; I am playing over

their heads."

"That's just what they are complaining about," said Mrs. Benjamin.

"You do not understand. As some one has said, 'there is a certain enormity of genius that at times makes a man invisible to his contemporaries!"

"But, though you may be invisible to them, Joseph, you are distinctly

audible, I can assure you."

"That is the musical artist's only consolation. If he can make himself heard, he will in time make himself felt."

That Mr. Benjamin was making himself felt soon became evident. The request courteous soon gave way to the demand imperative. The proprietor said, speaking for his tenants, that although he acknowledged the abstract charm of music and its power as a factor in the soothing of savage beasts, he drew the line when music became so retroactive in its effects as to make savage beasts of people who before had been placable human beings. He said that when his tenants wanted music they generally preferred to buy it outside, on the same plan as their restaurant luxuries, where they could enjoy the essence of the article and leave the residuum behind.

Mr. Benjamin thanked the proprietor for the delicate way in which he put a strenuous case, but intimated that the only rest the tenants would obtain from him would be where the notes of the music played demanded it. The proprietor threatened summary procedure. Mr. Benjamin pointed to his lease and reminded his landlord that the clause covering disorderly noises could not possibly apply to the play-

ing of such music as the "Götterdämmerung" at three o'clock in the morn-The case was taken to court, and Mr. Benjamin, with the aid of an able lawyer, won. The favorableness of the decision was based upon these points: first, that the music of Richard Wagner was originally neither conceived nor executed by the composer in any spirit of animosity toward mankind, but rather for the elevation of mankind; second, that the playing of the music of Richard Wagner was not attempted by the defendant with any malicious motive of visiting distress upon a contiguous community, but was the manifestation of a studious and esoteric desire to become better acquainted with the technical turbulences of the master; third, that the playing of the "Götterdammerung" at the hour of three o'clock in the morning, was so seasonably connected with the "twilight of the gods" that defendant must rather be commended for his observance as an artist than for his disagreeableness as a tenant; and, fourth, that defendant, in playing said "Götterdammerung" until the hour of three o'clock in the morning, had in no way exceeded the ordinary time limit of a Wagner opera.

With the advent of Summer the time came for open windows. One evening when, between rolls, Mr. Benjamin walked to the window to look out reflectively at the night, he found the street was crowded with a hushed and listening assemblage of

people.

He called his wife.

"There must be a fire in the neigh-

borhood," she said.

"Oblivious woman," said Mr. Benjamin, calmly; and he sat down to the "Eroica Symphony."

The next morning Mrs. Benjamin came into the dining-room with the

newspaper.

"Joseph!" she cried. "You are becoming famous," and she read aloud the following:

A MASTER IN AMBUSH

Last evening the residents of Central Park West were treated to another of the Open Window Chamber Recitals inaugurated by the Unknown Master of the Berkeley Apartment-House. The street was comfortably filled with a modish audience. Among those present were several of the musical critics of the metropolitan press. Mr. E. Major, of the Clavichord, was leaning in his accustomed place against the voluted column of the street-lamp, while Mr. F. Minor, of the Spinet, lounged insouciantly against a freshly painted tree-box. Undoubtedly this Unknown Master has his message, and it was the opinion of every one present last evening that he is delivering it.

Mrs. Benjamin laid down the paper and looked across the table at her husband with a glow of wifely pride. Calmly, serenely, he was breakfasting on two poached eggs and gazing straight ahead of him, far away into space.

"Joseph!" cried Mrs. Benjamin, in alarm, "you no longer listen to anything that I say. You are not the

same man you used to be!"

"Miranda, I am afraid that art has come between us," said Mr. Benjamin. "As the paper says, I have a message, and a power stronger than myself forbids the relinquishment of the mission." With that, he reached for the second egg.

One evening, after "Thus Spake Zarathustra," a card was brought in to Mr. Benjamin, bearing the inscription:

JOHANN WOLFGANG SCHLUSS. Impresario of the Royal Münchener-Augustiners.

Gesundheit Strasse. München.

'Herr Schluss immediately followed the card. He was a big man, his height accentuated by a long surtout of black. He wore a pointed beard, had restless, gleaming eyes and a smile of craft that was Mephistophelian. He brought in with him a breeze of forceful personality and vast activity. He seemed to have only a few moments to spare, and spoke in excellent English.

"Mr. Benjamin, the musical critic of the Clavichord has directed my attention to you. I arrived only in time to hear you play the final movement of the 'Richard Strauss.' That is enough. I don't want to hear any

more. I want you!"

Astounded at the suddenness of the invasion, Mr. Benjamin could scarcely move his lips to ask for explanation.

"Excuse my haste in presenting the proposition," said Herr Schluss; "my coach is waiting. Do you remember how the voice of Jenny Lind was first discovered? A man passing through a street happened to hear her. You have been discovered in the same way."

"But-I---"

"It is my intention to open with you in New York at the Madison Square Garden, because I can see that you require room for your volume. I shall play you afterward at Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago. We then jump to San Francisco. From there we go to Australia. Thence to England, and from England at once to Germany, where I shall finish up the season by playing you at Bayreuth, in the Temple of Wagner!"

"What about Paris?" feebly excepted Mr. Benjamin, for although he was trembling from the shock of the impresario's rapid explanation of the nature of his visit, he had not lost all sense of relative geography. "Why

exclude Paris?"

"Paris I reserve for your death."

"For my death!" gasped Benjamin.
"Yes. Paris is the only city in the world where they do justice to the illustrious dead. They bury great men there with pomp, display; and on the day of the funeral they usually have a rain-storm which makes the long procession of umbrellas look picturesque in the illustrated papers."

picturesque in the illustrated papers."
"But why must I die in Paris?"

"Safety clause in the contract. All your post-obit phonograph privileges will revert to me, and the value of these will be enhanced if you die with international *éclat*."

"But why should I die at all?" per-

sisted Benjamin.

"Consider your age," pleaded Schluss. "At your time of life, to produce such music is phenomenal. But—if you will pardon me—it is your swan-song! That is the very reason I am here. I see in you the

delayed but condensed, comet-like quality of genius. You will be great, and the grandest thing of all is that you will not last long enough for people to become accustomed to you."

"This is very refreshing information you are conveying to me," said

Mr. Benjamin.

Herr Schluss went on like a telegraph instrument: "Now for the minor, but not less important, details. You must let your hair grow. I must have a clause in the contract which expressly forbids your having it cut. It must also be bleached to give you an appearance similar to that of the Abbé Liszt. In Winter you must wear a fur-lined coat with a sealskin collar not less than six inches deep. In Summer, any goods, in season, of eccentric mis-You are a man of naturally kind disposition. I can read that in your eyes. You must cultivate an irritability of humor. You must smash a little bric-à-brac now and then, and kick the porter of your private car for bringing your kumyss either a minute too early or a minute too late. the way, do you live happily with your wife?"

"We are devoted to each other," said Mr. Benjamin, wondering what

was to come next.

"Bad, very bad! Your domestic affairs must at once become unsettled. You do not need to beat your wife, exactly, but you must make life very miserable for her. There is no more potent form of advertisement than family unhappiness. I think that is all, for the present. Nothing remains now but the consideration of terms. If you will call on me tomorrow at the Majestic we will discuss them, and then there will be nothing to do but sign the contracts and go right ahead."

Herr Schluss at once strode to the

door.

"Wait, wait!" said Mr. Benjamin, his head a-swim with the suddenness of it all. "You—you perhaps are not aware that I have been playing the piano only indirectly?"

"Ah, am I not!" cried the impre-

sario, with a smile of confidence. "I've had my fill of the regular piano-players; there are too many of them. I purpose to be first in the field with the twentieth century mechanical Thalberg!"

With that the black Mephistopheles vanished through the door, as he might have made his exit through the wings at the opera house, and Mr. Benjamin relapsed into a chair, feeling that he was face to face with his mission.

IV

It was not long before the musical world was awaiting expectantly the advent of the new virtuoso. The announcement was one well calculated to stimulate interest:

HERR JOHANN WOLFGANG SCHLUSS
Will have the honor of presenting, for
One Recital only,
On the evening of October 25th, at
Madison Square Garden,
MR. JOSEF BENEVSKI.

The engagement of this distinguished artist is necessarily limited. The impresario can place so little reliance on the temperament of the master that he can scarcely promise he will play at all. The répertoire will be chosen impromptu according to the caprices of Mr. Benevski. The audience is respectfully requested not to applaud the artist. Applause annoys Mr. Benevski and conveys to him no meaning concerning the quality of his work with which he is not already acquainted. Carriages will kindly approach and leave the Garden on the south street, keeping to the linoleum side.

The eventful evening came. The house was crowded. It was a typical first-night assemblage of the musical cognoscenti. You could tell that by the way they whispered throughout the recital, to the discomfort of that unfortunate minority which can only feel music without technically understanding it.

There was a long delay before Benevski appeared, which made even the most doubtful begin to feel that perhaps he really was an artist. When, at last, he did appear, this fear became intensified. Certainly, the white-haired figure that, with such a culti-

vatedly bored expression, walked to the piano must be that of an artist. nevski sat down. The programme-rustling did not at once subside. Benevski waited calmly, looking at the ceiling. In a quarter of an hour, when a sympathetic hush had settled over the auditorium, and the entire assemblage could feel its heart pulsating from the nervousness of over-wrought anticipation, he saw to the adjustment of his perforated roll and opened with the X Minor Concerto of Chopin. He finished it amid thunders of forbidden applause. It was one of the posthumous Chopin concertos, and he had torn out of the hearts of his auditors with instantaneous, almost piratical authority, the bravo cry that always greets the twin birth of masterly composition and interpretation.

But why linger, why describe, when there are morning newspapers published, and critics are found to tell one what to think:

Benevski's attack was superb . . . breadth limited only by the walls of the auditorium . . . has given a new shiver to the piano.

His foot-board touch is great. There now remains no doubt that civilization has over-cultivated the dexterity of the fingers, ignoring entirely the latent virtuosity of the feet.

The critics of the second-class journals were not so kind. One of them said:

It is so hard to know what he is getting at, and so difficult to get at the player.

The real musical critics dealt with the performance in their usual judicial and unmistakably professional style:

- . . . Tone, round and responsive . . . Chords, firm and exquisitely balanced . . . Used the pedal-lever with verve and decision, while the allegro button in the scherzo of the Schumann sonata was worked with great technical surety.
- ... Especially strong in his chromatic runs, which we regret to say do not take him far enough . . . The change from the bercaroles and berceuses to the Chopin Funeral March was most impressive . . . Made it a study in hearse-plumes. Nothing lacking but the death of the player . . . A pleasure, after hearing such an artist, to leave the place.

Yet, the rivet of Benevski's success was not driven home until the following day. Schluss came hurrying to him with a triumphant face, a handful of letters and an armful of packages.

"What are these?" asked Benev-

ski.

"Letters and samples from the soap merchants, the malt extract men, and the piano-makers. They offer money for your signature to testimonials. Your success as a virtuoso is now assured. Just put your signature to half a dozen of these."

"But I haven't tried the things

yet," protested Benevski.

"It isn't necessary. Sign." And Schluss gave him the prepared forms. Benevski signed, certifying to the wonderful recuperative powers of various food tablets and elixirs. Of all the testimonials the following was perhaps the most interesting:

Gentlemen: I have used the Skagamore Grand Piano you sent me on my tour around the world. It has stood thoroughly the trials of a sea voyage. Climatic changes have not in any way affected its original tone, which is to-day as fresh and pristine as on the day I purchased it. I consider the Skagamore Grand the best hammering keyboard for the diapasonola that I have ever used.

BENEVSKI.

After signing this, Benevski looked up at Schluss, helplessly. "I never lied like this before," he murmured, as Schluss departed. "That man has cast some occult spell around me. I

am in his power."

Schluss did not succeed, however, in making trouble between the virtuoso and his wife. When Benevski parted from her on his tour around the world the separation was most Their amicable. apartments had been taken originally on a five-years' lease and Mrs. Benjamin was still to Mr. Benjamin did not occupy them. tell his wife that he should never return to her again—that according to his contract he must die in Paris. He left her looking forward expectantly to his return some day—better so!

A tour of the world is done quickly; especially so under the hand of an impresario playing for points. schedule was Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco, one night each, with a triumph for the exponent of the "new music" everywhere. At San Francisco they met the steamer for Australia, where, at Melbourne, they played one Saturday Schluss husbanded afternoon. artist like a precious stone. He allowed his public merely to catch a facet glint, and then he pulled the screen, for, though a trickster, Schluss himself had the soul of an artist. Reaching England, Benevski played privately for the King and Queen, refusing to play in public on account of the climate. The pair arrived at Bayreuth on the morning of Wagner's birthday; here Benevski was scheduled to play at eleven in the morning. Schluss had the instrument sent to the theatre, and kept Benevski at his hotel until three o'clock in the afterthat the noon, saying would never understand it if they should open the recital on the scheduled hour.

When Benevski arrived at the theatre the auditorium was filled with a mass of restless, programme-fanning people that represented all the musical tramps of earth.

"Schluss," he said, nervously, "I

have a fear—a misgiving."

"Poof!" cried Schluss. "It's because you are going to play the master in his own home."

"No; I am afraid of the instrument. I spoke to the King about it in England. I told him I had trouble. He comforted me by telling me that trouble was indigenous to everybody. But I am sure the trouble is in the instrument."

"What do you think the trouble is?"

asked Schluss.

"I think it is in the valves. The instrument has not worked right since we made the voyage to Australia. The tones have lost their brilliancy and articulation. I haven't the same control of my dynamics."

"Play!" cried Schluss. "Don't be a weakling in the home of Wagner."

Benevski played and scored his first fiasco in the land of the musical Mahomet! He heard a blurred explosion in the interior of the instrument—the music gasped itself out into the silence of nothingness, and, rising from the stool, he fled from the sight of the assemblage.

Schluss appeared with the saving genius of a Napoleon, and said:

"Friends of music! Benevski and Richard Wagner once drank bock-beer together. How beautiful is the loyalty of the human heart when even the severity of professional training—the studiously cultivated abstraction of an artist—must yield to the emotions called up by the memory of a departed friend!"

No more impressive moment had ever been known in Bayreuth. And when Schluss and Benevski investigated the instrument they found that the leather bellows of the diapasonola had been eaten by ship-rats on the voyage from Australia. Benevski collapsed at the revelation. A doctor was called in and diagnosed the virtuoso's case as valvular disease of the heart, brought on through too strenuous association with his instrument.

"To Paris!" cried Schluss.

And there Benevski went, to carry out the final clause of the contract.

77

ABOUT one year later—Mrs. Benjamin's lease had still three years to run—several ladies and gentlemen were sitting chatting under one of the loggia arches that gave such a picturesque effect to the façade of the Berkeley Apartment-House, Central Park West.

It was evening, and the talk had turned on music, evidently suggested by the fact that several of the party had been to the opera that afternoon.

"By the way," said one, "have you ever heard anything further about Benevski?"

"Benevski?" laughed another; "why, he's in Paris, dying according to contract."

"How do you know?"

"I met Schluss the other day at the 'Martin.' He told me. Perhaps all our friends here do not know the story. Benevski used to live in this house, you know. His wife, in fact, still lives here. They were a quiet couple, and we hardly knew that they existed until the day that Benjamin—that was his name then—got one of those mechanical piano attachments, not bad things in their way, but which he persisted in playing until the most unheard of hours in the morning. Soon, every inhabitant of the place complained He kept on. Legal redress about it. was resorted to, but it turned out that there was nothing strictly in the letter of the law that could succeed in either stopping him or ousting him. known resource was exhausted by all the neighbors without avail. Finally, we organized a syndicate to get rid of him. He fancied he was a musician, you know—that he played the music all himself. We hired a bankrupt impresario to prove to him that he didto make him an offer to take him on tour. Schluss undertook the enterprise, having everything to gain and nothing to lose. And so we got rid of Benevški at last. It cost the syndicate of this Central Park block just one hundred thousand dollars, but it was cheap at that, eh, folks?" appealing to the others; and all laughed immoderately.

Suddenly the strains of music were heard.

"I wonder where that comes from," said one. "It can't be from the Mall pavilion. The wind is not in the right direction."

Another of the party leaped to his feet, as though suddenly shot. He had been the prime mover in the anti-Benjamin affair.

"Gentlemen!" he cried, with feeling, "we have thrown our one hundred thousand dollars into the gutter! That is piano music, and it emanates from one of the upper rooms in this house!

It is an old, familiar strain; it comes from an old, familiar quarter, and the lease, gentlemen, has still three years to run!"

The music was the vorspiel to "The Flying Dutchman."

Benevski had broken the contract and come home to finish his swan-song.



THE LAST JOURNEY

SOME day the winding path that we have trod, Its changing purpose ever unrevealed, Will lead us safely to a sunny field Where white and crimson clover breaks the sod. Some day, when we have passed beneath the rod, Our harvest at the best a barren yield, The heart-aches and the pain will all be healed By that White Peace which is the gift of God.

And yet a little longer I would wait, The while thy sands of life still slowly run, Until for thee the sunny fields unbar; Yes, I will stand beside the meadow gate Till thy last journey, too, is almost done, And on the clover faintly gleams a star.

MYRTLE REED.



THE MAN AND THE PEN

*EORGE BURTON'S handwriting alone is a difficult task to decipher. This, together with a careless habit of dashing his l's and shifting the wrong letter into a word, has a tendency to make his chirography appear weirdly grotesque.

The following curiosity was discovered by Miss Brown in her mail:

MY PEAR MISS BRAWN:

Yes, the small pox of candy was brom me; a little birth-dog token—that was all. I omitted to put in my cart by accident. It was exceepingly careless of me, and I was sorry afterward, when I recottecled. I do not believe that I ever neglected to send my cart with a present before. It is bad farm, you know and often leads to much embarrassmenx for some one else, who is not quilty. My regard for you was the only incectice I hat in sending it; please do not mention the thought.

I have quite recovered from the surfaiture of closet bunch I had at the Merril's theny

I have quite recovered from the surfeiture of claret bunch I had at the Merril's, thanx

you, and my bead-ache has entirely gorre.

you, and my bead-ache has entirely gorre.

Did I tell you the other evening about Williams's singing? He hat his voice fried by Farrachinni, who pronounced it an unusually high terror. Sig. F. charges Ten hollars an hour, I betieve. I pope and I do not pope that Pilly follows it up.

Last night I went to the Holburn's dance. Met a girt there with blond hair, blue eyes and deep, bewitching pimples. She had a cream-colored dress and a red American-Beauty nose; says she is acquainted with you—forget her name.

Where were you Thursday night? I slopped at the house at a guarter of nine and rurg the front-door bett. Nobody answered. I went around to the Flifton and ate a whole wetch-robble.

whole wetch-rabble.

Sincerety yourns, GEORGE E. BURTON.

Cramercy Dark, Mag eightieth, nineteen hundred and two.

ROY MELBOURNE CHALMERS.



BELATED

By Charles Gordon Rogers

ALHOUN took the telegram irefully. At no time did he like business; and at such a time as this, a time of pleasure, or at least the pursuit of it, the intrusion of commerce was an insult.

But this message caused him, if but for a moment, a new sensation. had supposed it to be of the cut-anddried sort: Cone & Co. offered so and so, and the market stood thus and thus; should they accept? As if Harding did not know more than any one elseat least, any one at .oo7 Broadway-So ran about such things? thoughts as he crumpled the envelope and unfolded the yellow sheet. stared and frowned as he read and reread the line. He had not thought it could be from her. But then, had he thought of her at all, even once, since leaving home?

Come home. I need you.—LAURA.

What on earth could his wife need him for? If there was any business that required the trained intelligence of a man, Harding could and would attend to it. He had told Harding to telephone, and also to see his wife now and then, and do whatever might be required in connection with the larger necessities of the household.

He wrote an answer, brief as his patience. "See Harding. He will do anything." He did not sign even an initial; and when the message was handed to the night operator, he lighted a cigar and impatiently waited for his train.

It was breakfast-time, and a fine morning, when he reached his destination and hotel, five hundred miles south and on the sea. He had slept well, in spite of the warm night; for the sea air had been sedative, and his berth a good one. So, good-humored once more, and hungry and vigorous, he scanned the register eagerly for her name ere he wrote his own.

Yes, she was here; at breakfast, the head-waiter informed him; and so he passed through the large, cool room until, at the farther end, by a window, he came to her—golden-haired, blue-eyed, pink and white and sensuous, serene and smiling, with the eyes of a score of men upon her.

"So you have come—at last!" she said, as she gave him her soft fingers.

"It has seemed 'at last!'" he answered. "It was the longest waking night I ever put in; and, added to that, only a chance of finding you here."

"And hasn't the upshot of the 'chance' justified the journey?"

"You are radiant!"

"And you look as fresh as—as that garden, after a long 'waking' night! You fibber! You slept like your very conscience!"

"Even that dreams of you."

"Do you know, I thought—not feared—that you would, after all, go home."

"Why? Have you never realized what a siren you are—and here, by your native blue element?"

"But the sirens were not at all nice! You forget your mythology. Perhaps you left it—at home."

"Well, I am farther from home than

ever now."

"Perhaps, by distance. But distance lends enchantment."

"A fallacy, Beryl. It is nearness

that lends enchantment, and I am here to prove it—by remaining."

"But, if she should write?"

"A remote contingency. She telegraphed."

"Ōh?"

"To say: All's well. Enjoy yourselves."

"So she presupposed a flirtation?"

"She knows I don't revel in my own

society.'

"By the experience of her own? Well, so do I, for that matter." And so on, until at last they rose, laughing, and passed in excellent humor, each with the other, to the broad veranda overlooking the blue sea.

On the point of going out, three mornings later, he had a telegramtelegram number two-put in his hand. He showed his annoyance as he opened it. Then, suddenly, his expression changed, and the boy saw the tall and handsome gentleman from the north grow pale beneath his tan.

The tall gentleman crushed the bit of paper. Since Janet has taken upon herself to telegraph in such an imperative way, it must have been because Laura was unable to write, that she was—that she had been—ill. Why had she not said so, plainly, in that first message? He would have gone at once had he known, as he would go now.

He smoothed out the crushed paper and reread this second word from

home:

Your wife in great danger. Come at once.-JANET.

It was two days old, belated. Then he turned quickly to the railway office. The boy, polite but ubiquitous, was The horses were at his elbow again. at the door.

"Have the horses sent back. shall not drive this morning. And—" he paused—"tell Mrs. Hope I have been called away very suddenly."

He would not see her, he said to himself. The conscience that, asleep, had dreamed of her, now, awakened, called for his wife.

Mrs. Hope might think what she

pleased. He was quite done with her; and with this sudden inversion of sentiment, he mutely reviled her. Already the liason had turned to dust and ashes at the touch of fate.

As if it had been scheduled for some individual contingency, a crisis such as he now experienced, there was a through train tabled to leave in ten He could catch it by furious driving, and did; leaving bag and baggage behind.

The train sped on, but the day dragged. He sent a wire to Janet, bidding her reply; but no reply came, and his heart was in a tumult.

He had never cared, to his superficial knowledge, in the past five years so much for his wife as he seemed to care now. If he should be too late?

. He had a thousand sweet memories of her, but they turned to bitterness for him, even as they came. These involuntary recollections swept like a tide upon him, crowding him over the shifting sands of self-condonement to the steel wall of self-conviction, from which there was no escape.

Indeed, he could see nothing but Laura's face; and when, that evening, they flashed by a south-bound train and he caught a glimpse of a woman's face in the last car, it seemed to him that it was hers, and he started up with almost a cry.

The sun was high on that early Summer morning when the long journey came to an end; but only the toilers had awakened to another day. The avenues were flecked with sunshine, but very still, as he drove

swiftly toward his home.

Well, thank God, there was his house at last! But now—thank God again—the windows gave no sign that he had come too late. He saw the housemaid turn away from a drawing-room window, but he thought strange that no face appeared above, that staid, old, anxious Janet did not show herself at the metallic sound of the hoofs upon the asphalt. He rang the bell, and was instantly smitten with self-reproach as he heard

its sound, fearing it might have disturbed her rest. Then, abusing himself for having forgotten it, he let himself in by his latch-key. He smiled faintly at his reflection, haggard and unshaven, in the glass, as he stepped softly, like an intruder, across the hall. A sound made him look up, and he saw Janet, in white attire, peering at him over the balustrade.

"Is—is she—out of danger?" he whispered, hoarsely, pausing on the first stair.

It seemed to him that his house-keeper smiled—a grim smile that made him go two strides up, and stand staring, incredulous.

"Didn't you understand?" she said. And her voice, unrepressed, seemed loud in the breathless quiet of the house. "She said she'd telegraphed, so I thought you knew."

"What in God's name do you mean?" he demanded, and ran swiftly up the broad stairs. "Is my wife not ill? Your message said she was in great danger."

His housekeeper neither flushed nor flinched before his angry stare, but

looked him squarely in the face.
"No, she wasn't ill," she said, slowly. "It was Mr. Harding was the danger, and she's gone away—with him."



CUPID'S CALLING

I'VE heard Love called things harsh and mild,
A blessing and a bore,
But never have I heard him styled
An architect before.
My cynic friend, who laughs at banns,
Doth stoutly, though, declare
That certain 'tis Love draws most plans
For castles in the air!

ROY FARRELL GREENE.



SHE NEVER DOES

MUSIC has charms to soothe the savage breast, but the girl next door doesn't play that kind.



THE FAIR SEX

WE bring them bon-bons every night,
And when we win their hearts to boot,
The darling girls turn round and say,
"To make him love you, feed the brute!"

A DIALOGUE

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox

H^{E-}	Let us be friends. My life is sad and lonely, While yours, with love, is beautiful and bright.
	Be kind to me. I ask your friendship only.
C	No star is robbed by lending darkness light.
Ѕне—	I give you friendship as I understand it;
Нв-	A sentiment I feel for all mankind.
SHE-	Oh, give me more! May not one friend command it?
OHE-	Look in the skies, 'tis there the star you'll find—
U.	It casts its beams on all with equal favor.
Не— Ѕне—	I would have more than what all men may claim.
OHE—	Then your ideas of friendship, strongly savor
TT	Of sentiments which wear another name.
HE—	May not one friend receive more than another?
Sне—	Not man from woman, and still remain a friend.
	Life holds but three for her—a father, brother,
TT	Lover; against the rest she must contend.
Не—	Against the Universe, I would protect you
•	With my life even, nor hold the price too dear.
Sне—	But not against yourself, should fate select you
	As Launcelot for foolish Guinevere.
Hr—	You would not tempt me?
Sне—	That is undisputed.
	We put the question back upon the shelf.
	My point remains unanswered, unrefuted;
	No man protects a woman from himself.
Не—	I am immune. For once I loved with passion, And all the fires within me burned to dust.
	I think of woman but in friendly fashion,
	In me she finds a comrade safe to trust.
Sне—	So said Mont Pelée to the listening ocean.
	Behold what followed! Let the good be wise.
	Though human hearts proclaim extinct emotion,
	Beware how high the tides of friendship rise.



A WISE PRECAUTION

 $B^{\rm IGGS-Why}$ did Dobbs postpone his marriage another year? Boggs-His fiancée has just graduated from a cooking-school, and he wishes to give her time to forget some of the things she learned there.

THE MOON AND THE MAIDS

By Marvin Dana

YOU have kept me waiting,"
Helen cried, and there was
a note of irritation in her

voice.

"It was because I wished to be alone with you," I answered, diplomatically. "If I had been on time, we should have had all the crowd about us on the way over."

At that she smiled and was appeased. Really, she was wholely adorable, as she stood on the landing-steps, waiting for me to help her into the boat. At sight of her loveliness I was glad indeed of my tardiness—a tardiness I had not planned; but women always accept flattery more readily than they accept excuses.

I thought Helen a trifle pale, and

said so.

"It's the moonlight," she explained, easily.

But I was sceptical. "You have a splendid color usually," I declared; and to restore it, I abruptly changed the subject.

"I was late, in order to save trouble," I announced in a matter-of-course

manner.

"What do you mean?"

"The steering, you know."
"The steering?"

"Naturally."

"You think-?"

"My dear girl, I know."

"But I steer-"

"Yes," I admitted, sadly, "you do, indeed. I row and you steer—heaven defend us! Now, when we're alone on the lake, with miles clear, it's safe enough. But when there are other boats—! I said, you know, that I didn't want a crowd around us; it's

unpleasant—don't you see?—collisions and tangles and all that, and one gets oneself disliked."

"Oh, you meant that, did you,

when you said-"

"Why, what on earth did you suppose I meant?" I questioned, bland-ly

Then I sat, without remorse, and watched a verification of my statement as to her usual color, for her face was all a flaming red. I laughed.

"You dare!"

But I reached out my hand to help her into the boat.

"Helen," I said, softly, "all the beauty of the sunset is in your cheeks just now, You must forgive my teasing, for the sake of this loveliness you have gained. You were a trifle too pale."

Then a dimple grew in the rose of her cheek, and she put her hand in mine,

and smiled.

I pulled lazily at the oars, and we floated out over the drowsing waters of Champlain. Burlington lay on the hillside whence we had come, almost hidden within the foliage of the trees. Few sounds were borne to us from its streets, and those served only to vary pleasantly the monotony of the evening silence. As the boat passed farther from the shore the mountains eastward beyond the city rose swiftly on the horizon, fantastic silhouettes against the sky. On the west, the Adirondacks loomed in rugged trend far as eye could reach. All about us the lake lay in level calm, dark and mysterious, save where a petaled path, tremulous as aspens, reflected the glory The air that drifted by of the moon.

us was warm with the sensuous life of June, soft, enervating, vibrant with

subtle strength of joy.

I looked at earth and sky and water, and then again toward the sky, at the serene loveliness of the moon. instant my soul trembled with desire for the vague, the awful splendors beyond mind's conceiving. Then a movement close at hand startled me; my eyes fell to-Helen. Her flowerlike face shone ravishing in the mellow light; her eyes glowed; her lips were ripe and red. I dropped the oars and moved toward her.

"I can't steer if you don't row," she said.

I suddenly realized that I was becoming too sentimental, without due preparation of the object. With a sigh I resumed my rowing, and as I pulled, I spoke my mind.

"In a scene so beautiful as this, Helen, where all the senses find delight, the heart, too, seeks—

"I once heard a sermon like that,"

Helen interrupted.

"The deuce you did!" I rejoined, impolitely—I was much irritated. "It must have been a pretty poor sermon, if it was much like—" I broke off, in confusion.

"Oh, go on; finish—please do," Helen urged. She was enjoying herself mightily; and now, at sight of my embarrassment, she laughed, a laugh gay and mocking—and most sweet.

"But be serious," I pleaded. "But be gay," she retorted. "The moon—" I began.

"Pooh! The moon is dead and out of the world," she railed.

"Anyhow, just now it seems to be a live issue," I insisted, drily.

"It's really only a ghost," Helen continued, "and, for a ghost, it is quite too unsuitably frivolous. Somehow, one associates with it all sorts of silly love-makings and straw-rides and balconies and things. Byron said he was

"Byron was in the moon?" I que-

ried, agape.

"Stupid! No. He was in it, the er-well, then, since you are both illiterate and dense, the—er—oh, the devil!"

"Helen!" I cried, truly shocked.

"That wasn't an exclamation," she explained, with indignant haste; "it was a quotation. Do you understand Byron said, 'The-er-the at last? devil's in the moon for mischief."

"He is, indeed," I agreed, sullenly. One hardly enjoys being called at the same time both illiterate and denseby a girl, especially by a very pretty girl, more especially by that girl when one is alone with her in a boat by moonlight, most especially when that girl is one's betrothed! So I bent to my oars with angry vigor.

"Forgive me, dear." Her voice came soft and insinuating as a caress. She slipped from her seat and knelt before me, her hands on my knees. "I'm sorry, dear It was rude and vulgar and hateful, and I deserve a good whipping. Kiss me, Billy."

I kissed her, and my temper grew

happeir.

"But it is a wonderful moon, you know." I remarked, presently, when we were back in our places.

most wonderful moon know!" Her voice was surcharged

with reverent awe.

For a moment I did not appreciate the sarcasm of her words. When their significance dawned on me, I resumed my rowing. Really, she was too provoking!

This time Helen proved unrepent-Instead, she became garrulous on the subject of the moon—garrulous,

but not sentimental.

"It is that—er—imp of mischief in the moon that makes me mischievous. Billy, dear. Byron was right; the moon is a mischief-maker, always causing trouble, as between you and me now, for example."

"Oh, not at all," I demurred, stiffly. "It's not the moon—it's—er—some-

one else."

"Meaning me?"

"Yes, you!" I agreed, savagely. But Helen only laughed, though I had thought to see her much put out.

"You think so, but you are quite

wrong," she declared; "it's the moon—yes, indeed. It makes one mildly lunatic, just moonstruck enough to be silly."

"Not me," I asserted, firmly.

"Oh, you! Perhaps you are not so sensitive. But, anyhow, it's an awfully big moon to-night; you'll feel it before the evening is over. Mark my words."

"Is that a joke or a prophecy?"

"Both; it's funny and it's true. You'll do something foolish very soon."

"Then I'd best do something sensible while there's time," I said; and, at the saying, kissed her.

"Not so silly, yet?" I questioned,

happily.

"Oh, not yet," she said, and smiled. "That was quite the proper thing to do, under all the circumstances."

"Including the moon?"

"Including the moon. Now, if it had been another girl, under all the circumstances, including the moon—"

"Absurd!" I cried. "Why absurd?"

"As if I could kiss another girl!"

"Oh, I fancy you could kiss another girl—if you tried."

"But I wouldn't!"

"I should think not, indeed!" she exclaimed, tartly. "How dare you even speak of anything so horrid!"

"But I—I didn't suggest it," I

pleaded. "You said----'

"I won't hear a word," she cried; and then sat silent and stern, whilst I rowed swiftly, pondering on the ways of women. So we came to the point across the bay where we were to join the others of our party.

There were a score of us, all young—even the chaperons. From the beach a smooth lawn ran back a hundred yards or more, varied by a few trees and shrubberies. In the open places there was light in plenty for our revels from the stars and moon, but beneath the trees the shadows made mysterious darkness, an abundance of romantic nooks in which to murmur tender vows. The scene was, indeed, perfect in its charm. All the elements conspired to fashion a para-

dise for our pleasuring. There was gentle languor, but no oppressiveness, in the idly-drifting Summer air; the greensward was level and soft and velvet-black in the mellow light; the grouping of the foliage was a constant delight to the eye; beyond, the waters of the Champlain stretched their shimmering loveliness, and mirrored and multiplied the beauties of the heavens; the waves, kissing so softly the pebbles of the beach, whispered daintily of the love that is Nature's heart. Over all, the silver graces of the moon touched to a magical splendor, an insistent glamour that made each and every thing strange and wonderful, and most beautiful.

From the concealment of clustered shrubberies came the music of harp and violin. The violinist, a boy destined to fame, played with a skill and passion that thrilled, while the delicate ripples of the harp wrought histories in harmonies—the universal truths of which the melody told the single emotions. Here and there a bird, awakened by these unwonted intrusions, wondered tunefully. The shrill chorus of insects sounded in a pulse of absolute contentment. And ever the stately moonbeams streamed over all, like a benediction of peace.

We had just finished dancing the Virginia reel, when the catastrophe occurred. We had been footing it like fays, winding blithesome over the grass, swinging and tripping it tirelessly, till the wild rhythm was in our blood, and the calm of the night was forgotten in the gay leaping of our hearts.

My partner for the dance was a vivacious brunette, pretty, petite, all dimples and smiles and joyousness. As we paused for a moment in the shadows, her eyes, darkly flashing and provoking, drew me. My face was close to hers; I kissed her—only once, I swear. Then she fled from me.

Of a sudden, I became sane and—sorry; for I loved Helen, and her only, and I cared not a jot for any other woman.

That episode ended my pleasure

for the evening, though we danced for an hour or so longer, until the chaperons instituted martial law.

On the way home, I rowed my best, until our boat was far ahead of the others; then, as I rested on my oars, I spoke to Helen, for my conscience would give me no peace.

"Do you believe I love you?"

"Why, yes," she answered, much

surprised. "Why?"

"I wish you to remember it, to keep it in mind just now. Remember, I love you—you! nobody else."

"Well, what of it?"

"I kissed another girl to-night."

I had meant to tell it skilfully, but now I realized that it had been almost more than I could do to tell it at all.

There was a silence. Helen sat motionless, her face turned from me. At last I could endure it no longer.

"Helen!" I cried, humbly.

"Do not speak to me!" she exclaimed, and her tone was so bitter that I uttered not another word—till I said, "good night," as I left her at the door.

For two days I meditated on the irony of fate and the injustice of the universe at large. Then, as Helen remained persistently invisible when I called, I wrote her a letter, in which I embodied my musings—in part. Here is an extract:

I committed a folly. It was a crime against my love for you. But it was not a premeditated crime. Even, it was not a crime, morally. The moral quality of an action lies in the intention, and I had no intention—absolutely no intention—of kissing that girl. She's not so very pretty, usually; and I don't like her particularly, while I love you. Will you shatter our life's happiness because of this folish mistake I made? No, not "I made." I didn't do it—it was only a silly, superficial part of me that was guilty. The real true me was taken unawares, and is as indignant as you can be—more, for it knows the truth, while you can't quite understand it all. I have done the hardest thing to do—I have confessed. Forgive me, dearest.

Much more I wrote, but I thought most of that fact as to my confession. I had confessed! There lay the whole trouble. If I had but kept silent! When I told Helen of the affair, I conveyed to her a wrong impression, for she could not fathom how I could love her and yet kiss another girl. So she doubted my love. I had, then, given her a false view of the matter, merely by telling the truth. At this thought I rebelled; I began to see things in a different light. I had, indeed, lied by speaking the truth, was my conclusion. To have told the truth, I should have lied, declaring that I had never kissed any other girl; then she would have believed the truth—that I loved her.

The consequence of such reasoning was that I made a vow—yes, a solemn vow: if ever I were reconciled to Helen, and if ever I kissed another

girl, I would not confess it!

The next afternoon I met Helen at a lawn-party. She smiled as I approached her, and held out her hand. I seized on it, much as a drowning man clutches at the proverbial straw.

"Then you—you—" I stammered, my heart pounding.

"Yes? I what?"

"For—give—?"

"Oh, that! Of course," she returned, airily. "You see, you confessed."

"I—I confessed?"

"Otherwise, I would never have forgiven you."

I remembered my vow, and shuddered. I shuddered again, as she continued:

"For I saw you kiss her."

"The dev—that is—I—I thought you were merciless—for a week now—."

"This is the third day," she corrected me, sweetly. "But you deserved all your punishment, even though you confessed."

"I understand," I said, soberly. "I've had my lesson." I was thinking that, for the future, I must avoid temptation. Since I had sworn not to tell, I must not kiss.

"And so, you know, I was right," Helen declared, triumph in her voice.

"Eh? right?" I queried, in astonishment.

"Yes; I told you he was in the moon; I said you'd do something silly that night—and you did!"

"Ah, yes," I agreed, gladly; "er he was in the moon that night. I was silly—it was the moon!" But I searched my own soul with a question: Was it the moon or the girl?

Since, for the future, I am vowed against confession, I would better avoid—both!



LOVER AND ORACLE

TELL me true, Sir Oracle, Does she love me, love me well?

"Divination is not clear;
Omens opposite appear;
Now the flame that burns her cheek
Golden thoughts of you bespeak;
Now the gleam within her eyes
Says she holds you worship-wise.
Then the cloud upon her brow
Seems to deprecate your vow;
And her lips, like Cupid's bow,
Doubts of your devotion show."

But the truth!—how may I tell? "Ask her!" cries Sir Oracle.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



AS TO JOKES

RIEND—You call that a joke? You'll never be able to sell it. Humorist—Well, in that case, it will be a joke on me. "I see; and, if you do sell it, it will be a joke on the editor."



EXTREMES MEET

THE ACTOR—I say, old man, can you lend me a couple of dollars? I don't get my salary till to-morrow.

THE REPORTER—Sorry, my boy; but I haven't a cent. I got mine yesterday.

SONG

MY thoughts of you are blossoms in my heart—A garden from the world set far apart, Filled with the fragrance and the tender dew Of my abiding love—these thoughts of you.

They bloom so brightly that I dare not speak When that their flame arises to my cheek; I dare not speak—for fear the blooms will fall And show your name upon the leaves of all.

My dreams of you are bubbles from the sun, Life's sun of love that hath their beauty spun, My poet's soul sends forth each night anew These shining worlds that hold my dreams of you.

If every one of them could live on high We'd need no other stars within the sky; Night would be day, rose, violet and blue— Lit by the fires that form my dreams of you.

ANNULET ANDREWS.



POPULAR

HOW did he make such a rapid fortune?"
"Perfumery. He manufactured a triple extract of gasolene for people who couldn't afford automobiles."



NECK OR NOTHING

TEACHER—And what was the tree with the forbidden fruit? JOHNNY BROOKLYN—Must 'a' been a rubber plant.



"Which act?" I asked; "the second or the third act?"

Since then there has been a coolness between us, as he cannot understand my ignorance of anti-climax.

THE QUEST OF BLEEKER VAN DORN

By Herbert Hall Winslow

WELVE o'clock, midday. At a table in the gentlemen's café at Delmonico's three fashionably attired young men of leisure were seated. Three matutinal cocktails glowed darkly-golden in the glasses before them. Fresh from the hands of their respective valets, not one had been awake for over an hour, yet their faces wore an expression of weariness more befitting the close of a long day than its commencement.

Of the three, Walker Lindell had not yet sounded all the depths of life in his twenty-six years; Carroll Jennings had preserved some slight show of interest in the events around him; while the eldest, Bleeker Van Dorn, had drunk the unsatisfying cup of pleasure to the dregs in all the gayest capitals of the civilized world.

'Why don't you say something, Bleeker?" asked Walker, after a silence, as all put down empty glasses, and began to nibble languidly at the large hothouse strawberries now placed before them. "You haven't spoken since we sat down."

"Say something?" echoed Van Dorn, passing his hand over his face to hide a vawn. "What is there to talk about? What is there ever to talk about? A new comic-opera singer in town; somebody's wife run away; somebody else wishing his wife would run away: a new face in one of the boxes at the Metropolitan. Bah!"

"I've got something new," said Carroll Jennings; "Millicent Saxton's engagement to Jack Cranford; heard it at the ball at the Waldorf last night."

Cranford always was a conven-

tional idiot," replied Van Dorn; "he'll marry the conventional heiress, of course."

"Well, by Jove, Bleeker!" cried alker, "what do you want? An only child and twenty millions in her own right—isn't that game worth bagging?"

Damnably conventional! We all go to the same houses and meet the same people, here and at Newport and in Florida and all the other places that bore a man to death. We go to Europe in shoals, cooped up in the same steamers, and take houses abroad to entertain one another all over again. And then we male idiots marry girls in our own set-when the foreign fellows with titles don't carry them off—and so fix ourselves in the same rut for life."

"Well, you don't wish to marry a milkmaid, do you? or one of the French dancers from the music halls?" said Carroll.

Bleeker Van Dorn looked serious. "The newspapers tell us," he said, slowly, "about poor devils starving to death in this big town. I never read those articles, unless I stumble on them unawares—somehow, they interfere with my digestion. But I'm starving, too, and I feel something of the despair those creatures must feel, who are probably better off starved, after all."

"Then eat your breakfast—here it

is," said Walker, laughing.

Van Dorn frowned. "I'm serious starving is the word—starving for the lack of a new sensation. My God! what wouldn't I give for a new emotion! You both smile; but I am older than you. It's a horrible thing to be young and yet to have outlived your emotions—to feel that there is nothing that can excite, or thrill, or interest

you any more."

"You seem to have quite a flow of emotions on tap, yet," said Walker. "That was dramatic, really, old man. You've gone the whole pace, except marriage. Try that, if you wish a new sensation."

"He'll never find it in marriage," said Carroll, with a laugh that he intended to be exceedingly cynical.

"I don't know," replied Walker.
"They do say that the life of a married man, nowadays, is full of excitement. The girls all pronounce matrimony with a slight variation of the third syllable; and the old saying has been changed to read: 'Two is company, and three is divorce.'"

Van Dorn, evidently annoyed, picked up a morning paper and glanced at a startling headline. "That woman will be acquitted," he said, "and yet

she is unquestionably guilty."

"Oh, you are reading about the Jaynes trial," said Walker, sipping his coffee. "Yes, she will be acquitted, of course. No jury would send that beauty to the electric-chair."

"How do you know she is a beauty?"

asked Carroll.

"Jack Cranford raved over her; he was at the trial yesterday. By the way, Bleeker, he mentioned seeing you there."

"I was there," said Van Dorn, quietly. "Margaret Jaynes is the most beautiful woman I ever saw, and I've seen my share of them all over the world."

"And yet you think she is guilty of

murder?"

"Exactly. She was in love with this fellow Carabough, and, when they eloped one day to New York from Philadelphia, she expected him to marry her immediately. The evidence shows that he postponed the wedding from day to day. She confided to the landlady of the Thirty-eighth street boarding-house that she had left an unhappy home—mother dead, step-

father unkind, and all that sort of thing. She said Carabough had compromised her in the eyes of the world, and she could not go back to Philadelphia, but that she would kill him if he trifled with her longer."

"Deliciously blood-curdling crea-

ture!" interjected Carroll.

"But see what followed," continued Van Dorn. "He returned the next evening and evidently gained her forgiveness. They started for Hoboken to be married."

"Why Hoboken?"

"Possibly because marriages made in Hoboken are more easily dissolved than those contracted in heaven—or New York. Carabough displayed a foresight worthy of a comic-opera star. At any rate, it was a very cold, dark night, and they were the only passengers on the ferryboat who remained outside. A deck-hand observed them in excited conversation, and overheard the woman accuse the man of treach-A moment later, Carabough went overboard. No one saw him fall, but they found the woman screaming, leaning over the rail and crying out that she had been the cause of his death."

"But," said Walker, "he may have fallen overboard, as she testified at the trial. According to the evidence, he had been drinking heavily all that

day."

"My dear boy," answered Van Dorn, "the chain of circumstantial evidence drawn around her is absolutely startling in its completeness. They found a letter from her in his rooms, in which she threatened to kill him if he deceived her again; she does not deny it. Why, day before yesterday, on the witness-stand—"

"I thought you went down yester-

day," interrupted Walker.

"I have been there every day this week," said Van Dorn, quietly.

"You might find your new sensation there," suggested Carroll.

Van Dorn looked serious. "I might," he answered, after a pause.

Walker beckoned to the waiter for the check. "Suppose we go down to the court-house for an hour; we may

I wish to see see the jury come in. her face when she hears the verdict."

At five o'clock that afternoon Margaret Jaynes came out into the free air of Centre street and looked about her. The jury that acquitted her had been out less than an hour. Not a man would have believed her guilty, even if he had seen her commit the deed. He would have put it down as an optical illusion on his part. So much for the power of radiant beauty. the formalities of law had been complied with. The girl was free to go wherever her fancy might dictate. Behind her, the ill-smelling, crowded court-room; the "Bridge of Sighs," the somber Tombs, with its tier upon tier of pent-up misery; the shame, the sorrow and the unsolved mystery of Raphael Carabough's death; before her-what?

No friends stood by her side. had quietly, but firmly, refused to disclose her plans to the friendly Tombs matron, who felt a decided interest in the beautiful young woman she had held in charge for nearly two months. The girl had been equally uncommunicative with her lawyers, for whose benefit she had sold the only piece of property she possessed in the world.

As she descended the prison steps a large, flashily-dressed, red-faced woman, generously bediamonded, accosted her. There was nothing objectionable in the salutation; the words were simply these: "Come with me and see what I can do for you." But Margaret Jaynes's white face flamed red as if she had received a blow, and she gave the woman a prolonged, scornful, infinitely contemptuous stare that was completely effectual in sending her away, disconcerted and conscious of the utter failure of her design.

"She knows how to take care of herself," said Walker Lindell, lighting a cigarette across the street.

'She has need to," answered Carroll

Jennings, sagely.

Only Bleeker Van Dorn looked and said nothing.

There was a crowd, of course—a con-

glomerate, East Side crowd, of many nationalities-staring at her and jostling about her as they would have stared and jostled at sight of an epileptic in a fit, a horse that had fallen through a manhole or a curbstone peddler with some new kind of magic cement. Two policemen kept them from closing in on her; but the police interest in Margaret Jaynes's case was ended, and while one officer offered to call a cab, another advised her to go away as quickly as possible.

"Pardon me," said Bleeker Van Dorn, suddenly, in low tones, very close to her. "I have no intention of intruding on you, believe me; but my carriage is at your disposal. It will take you out of this mob, wherever you wish to go, and I ask nothing more

than to put you into it.'

Margaret Jaynes hesitated. She looked him full in the face; and the cold refusal on her lips remained unspoken.

The crowd parted as the two crossed the street—the swagger club-man, scion of one of "our best families," and the woman who had just been acquitted of murdering her lover. He helped her into the carriage as if she had been a belle of the Charity Ball.

"Give John your directions after you're clear of this street," he said, lifting his hat. Then he rejoined his companions, and she was gone—gone, before he could observe that Margaret Jaynes, whom no one had ever seen weep since the first day of her incarceration, leaned back on the cushions, shaking with sobs, the hot tears rolling down her cheeks.

"Well, by Jove!" said Walker, as Van Dorn hurried them away; for the crowd, in lieu of better prey, had "You're a turned upon them now. wonder! That carriage episode was a master-stroke. Well, I don't blame

"But I pity him when the papers come out to-morrow," said Carroll. "Here's a ready-made romance for the reporters. 'Bleeker Van Dorn, one of our most exclusive---'"

"Don't be an ass, Carroll," said Van

Dorn. "As for you, Walker, if your idea of my intentions was not so characteristic of you, I should feel like knocking you down."

"Ah, then you do confess intentions!" cried Walker, unabashed.

"Did it ever occur to you that even a man like me may sometimes fall victim to a good impulse?"

"Oh, so you are doing it out of pure philanthropy! You have changed your mind and believe her innocent!"

"I haven't changed my mind. I still believe her guilty." His face lighted up; his voice sounded clear and firm, despite the roar of the street as they turned into lower Broadway. "I am going to study her mind—the mind of a murderess—but not from the sentimental point of view. I am going to make her confess her crime—to me."

"That would be too horrible!"

Even Walker looked shocked.

"And useless as well as horrible," said Carroll. "Suppose your infernal plan succeeds—suppose she confesses what will you do with her then?"

"My dear fellow," answered Van Dorn, "I have no desire to injure the girl. Her future plans are her own. I simply intend to conduct a class of one in experimental psychology, purely for my own amusement. If my researches are successful, neither you nor any other human being will ever know it."

The trio took a Broadway car, and the journey up-town was made almost in silence. A curious restraint seemed to have fallen upon all three—a restraint that was not lifted until Van Dorn left to go to his mother's. "I make it a point to dine at home once a month when I am in town," he said, smiling.

A month later the town rang with the startling news that Bleeker Van Dorn had quietly married Margaret Jaynes, at the Little Church Around the Corner.

II

Mr. and Mrs. Bleeker Van Dorn had returned from their six months'

wedding journey—a journey that included London, Paris, Vienna, Munich, Rome and half the fashionable resorts of Europe. They stopped nowhere very long; the woman's story found them out. There was no getting away from it, even at St. Petersburg; so at last Bleeker brought his wife home to New York.

As she dismissed her maid and joined him in the larger room of their luxurious apartment, she was far more regally beautiful than she had been as the notorious heroine of the Carabough case. She came to his chair and half bent over him, and there was in her face the indescribable illuminating expression of a woman who loves. She did not place her white arm about his neck, nor smooth his dark hair, nor kiss him; for Bleeker was not demonstrative himself and did not approve of these manifestations in others. A woman's caresses, as he himself said, had long since lost the power to stir his blood. And yet there was no lack of virile strength in the handsome face he turned up to her.

"Are you glad we have come home,

Bleeker?"

He looked at her lazily, with the eyes of a connoisseur. Her voice was musical. She had all the outer characteristics of the well-groomed woman. Her gown was perfect, but not more perfect than the figure it enveloped. He said to himself that there was soul in her beauty, too; it was something more than the mere sensuous beauty that charms for the moment.

"Yes," he said, "there is only one New York, you know. We shall stay here, now, and go out and see peo-

ple."

"Do you think," she said, very slowly, "do you believe your friends will—ever think any better of me?"

It was such a preposterous question that he did not pretend to deceive her. "What do I care?" he said; "what do we care?"

"I care a great deal, Bleeker; I care so much that sometimes I feel as if the only way to repair the wrong

I have done you would be to throw myself into the river!"

She stopped and turned pale. Bleeker seemed to shiver slightly; or was it merely her imagination? The river! Ah, there were ugly memories for them both in those two little words.

"Bleeker, I have ruined your life! I had no right to marry you, dear. It was selfish, cruel. You know, we must always be ostracized! But how could I help it? From the first I used to look at you in the court-room, and yours seemed the only pitying face in all that awful crowd! And when the trial was just over and I stood there on the prison steps, all alone—oh, no woman was ever so alone!—you came to me like one of God's messengers and saved me from myself. Oh, Bleeker! how could I help loving you! How could I refuse you when you asked me to be your wife? And yet it was all wrong -all---all wrong!"

He had tried to stop her several times, but the impulsive outburst of her heart would not be stayed. She had never spoken so before. He got up nervously and sat down again.

"For heaven's sake, Margaret, don't rake up the past!" he cried, irritably.

"Forgive me, Bleeker; but now we have come back among your friends, and you must suffer all these cruel slights again on my account."

"I don't suffer from them," he answered, almost angrily. "I married you with my eyes open. I am no disciple of sickly conventionality, and I am my own master in everything. When I complain, Margaret, it will be time for you to feel like this."

"I don't mean to speak of what is past, Bleeker; I won't, after to-night; indeed, I won't. But there are some things I must say now. We ought not to try to conceal our feelings from each other. There should be perfect confidence between us."

"I am listening," he said; "but you merely harrow up your own feelings unnecessarily by pursuing this sub-

ject."

She sat on the tête-à-tête chair near him, gazing at him lovingly, sadly.

"Do your friends really believe me guilty, Bleeker?"

He did not answer.

"I could not have suffered more if I had been guilty of a hundred crimes. I dreamed, night after night, of death in that awful chair! Have I not suffered enough? The jury said I was innocent; what right have your friends to condemn me now?" She bent her head as if beneath a weight greater than she could bear.

"I tell you not to trouble about it. My friends may go to the devil. We can't stop them from thinking what they please, but we can stop caring what they think."

There was a pause. The ormolu clock struck musically. The open fire snapped and sputtered. She threw up her head at last, and her eyes gleamed proudly, defiantly.

"I won't care, Bleeker! I won't care for anything! It is enough for me to know that you believe me innocent. You have never told me so in words, but when you asked me to be your wife, that meant more than anything, and, oh, how I loved you for it!"

Another silence fell between them—a silence portentous, ominous. Bleeker opened his lips as if to speak, but for the first time in his life the words he wished to utter stuck in his throat and almost choked him.

"It is a foolish fancy, Bleeker, but just now, when we must face everybody again, and I shall need all my courage—would you mind putting your arm around me, just once, dear, and telling me—it is only a whim of mine—that you believe me innocent?"

Again she thought he shivered slightly. He shifted his position, uneasily. Then the words he had been trying to speak came to his lips.

"Are you innocent, Margaret?"

"Am—I—innocent?" The words sounded meaningless as she echoed them.

"Yes. I have never questioned you; I was content to take you as you

were and bestow on you the highest honor any man can confer on a woman; but, as you say, there should be perfect confidence between us. The time has indeed come when I feel that I should know."

She rose and looked at him with widening eyes, not sure of what she

heard.

"But—you married me—and now now you ask me if I am innocent of that—crime? I don't understand you, Bleeker."

"The fact that I married you, my dear Margaret, has nothing to do with

your guilt or innocence."

"Nothing to do with my guilt or innocence! God in heaven! You asked me to be your wife—and yet you were not sure of my innocence!"

"To be candid, Margaret, I was not

sure."

"You believed me guilty?"

"I did not know."

"You believe me guilty now?"

"I do not know. That is why I ask you to tell me the truth; whether you ever loved that man or not——"

"I never loved him; it was a girl's infatuation; a momentary ascendency of a base but stronger nature. There was nothing wrong between us; I never loved him—I hated him before his death! I hate him still because he has come between you and me, even now!"

"Margaret, I don't doubt that you had cause to hate him. I should treat you no differently; I should care no less for you if you told me with your own lips that you thrust him into the water that night! I simply wish to know the truth."

"And you—my husband—ask me that?"

"I ask it because I am your husband—because I have a right to know."

She did not reply at first, but she realized it all now. Slowly, slowly, the love-light faded out of her eyes; the warm, rich color came back to her cheeks and mounted to her temples. He saw in her face the hunted look, the sudden, furious madness of a wild creature brought to bay, wounded unto death and, for the

moment, hating, and longing to destroy, the author of its misery.

"I'll not tell you!" she cried. "I'll never tell you! Believe what you wish. You have thought me a murderess all these months, and waited for this moment, when my heart was bursting with love and gratitude toward you, to say this awful thing! You—you—I could kill you for those words!"

She clenched her slender fingers; her lithe body swayed; every nerve and muscle seemed tense with overwhelming excitement. He had never seen her look like this before.

"As you killed Raphael Carabough," answered Bleeker, calmly. "Thank you; you have answered my question."

III

THE Van Dorns, greatly to the surprise of those who believed Bleeker would exert all the influence of his unquestioned social position to compel at least a certain amount of acknowledgment for his wife, did not attempt to storm even the outlying breastworks of aristocracy's citadel. He came and went among his own old cronies, was seen at the clubs as before his marriage, but did not take his wife anywhere; he did not even mention her name to his friends.

There were rumors that the Van Dorn family and its most influential connections had held a secret conclave, and decided to receive the prodigal if he would quietly divorce his wife in some distant state. Gossip added that a Van Dorn cousin of irreproachable social standing, one of the pillars of a fashionable church, had been deputized to broach this subject to Bleeker, and had been ignominiously knocked down for his pains. But these were only rumors, and neither Walker Lindell nor Carroll Jennings, rash youths as they were, dared question Bleeker concerning them.

As the weeks passed, however, a distinct moral deterioration was observed in the subject of these rumors. He was most often found with the club set whose nightly potations were the deepest; and men remarked, in the cafés, that Bleeker Van Dorn drank absinthe like a French roué.

Twice the Van Dorns had changed their apartments, because other families objected to living in the same building with the heroine of a murder trial. Their present quarters were none the less luxurious; but the people in this house asked no questions and made few complaints; perhaps because they had thoroughly up-to-date skeletons of their own.

Bleeker let himself into his wife's drawing-room one night about ten o'clock, and sat down wearily. He had picked the wrong horse at the races, and the dusty ride back to town had been more disagreeable than usual in consequence. Margaret had not been well, lately. She was lying down in the adjoining bedroom when he came in.

She spoke to him from the other room, and asked if it were he. He answered that he had come home to sit and read a while. But he did not read. Instead, he paced the room nervously, in smoking-jacket and slippers, until her quick ears heard him.

"Is anything wrong, Bleeker?" came the soft voice from the other room.

"No," he answered. He paused near her door and suddenly stretched out his arms. Into his face came a passion of love and longing that startled him as he caught his own reflection in the cheval glass. He controlled himself to speak as gently as he could. "I'm nervous to-night, Margaret; I'll close the door, so that I may not disturb you."

"You do not disturb me," she answered.

His whole being thrilled at the tone of her voice. But he shut the door, although his hand trembled.

"My God!" he cried, under his breath; "in another moment I should have gone—there to her, and she—a murderess!"

For he could not drive from his heart the ugly thought, the certain conviction that had lived and thrived there like a noxious weed, ever since he sat in the court-room and listened to the circumstantial evidence that condemned her in his eyes. He knew it all by heart. He had argued with himself hour after hour, night after night; in the cold, clear light of reason it became only the stronger, the more incontrovertible. He would have given every dollar of his fortune, half of life itself, to disprove it. He had privately hired lawvers and detectives to go over the whole wretched ground, from the time Margaret Jaynes first met Raphael Carabough to the day of his mysterious death. But nothing availed. She was beautiful, loving, queenly, fascinating—but a murderess!

He had risked everything for a new sensation. He had found only unsatisfied longings, deeper than any he had ever experienced, but suggestive only of illimitable ruin and despair. For every day held the possibility of awakening him to the consciousness that he had grown to love Margaret with an intensity of which he had never, even in his earlier days, deemed himself capable.

And she was a murderess! She had killed one man. Might she not yet, in a fit of rage similar to that he had witnessed, destroy her husband as she had destroyed her lover?

He wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead and his wrists. There was the sideboard. absinthe on stepped into another room, and as he poured the oily, greenish liquid into the glass, his hand shook so that he could hardly raise it to his lips. Then he went back to the little drawingroom and unlocked his desk in the alcove, drew out a scrap-book in which the newspaper accounts of Margaret Jaynes's trial were pasted, and began to read them for the hundredth time.

There were the accursed words, in black and white. "The prisoner admitted that she had threatened Carabough's life when angered." Had she not practically threatened him—her husband—three months ago? He put

the book down. He felt the need of more absinthe.

The last drink warmed him. position appealed to him for the first time in a new light. He, Bleeker Van Dorn, who might have made anything of his life, had thrown himself away on a woman who had been confined in the Tombs for murder! And she was his wife, sleeping in the next room—the bearer of his name, the custodian of his family honor. It was laughable a complication for a French farce, or a Greek tragedy!

What is that strange, bluish mist over in the corner, which seems to move toward him? The figure of a man comes out of it—a man he has never seen, but whose face he recognizes instantly from the published pictures.

It is Raphael Carabough!

Out of the mist and the damp; out of the gray river, wet and hideous and cold, just as they had found him! Does he point toward the bedroom where his murderess sleeps, or is it only a mad delusion born of the little green devil?

"Have you come to me—have you come to warn me? Yes, yes; I know. She murdered you, but, by heaven, she shall not kill me! She shall

The mist and the figure had vanished. Only the wild-eyed man in smoking-jacket and slippers remained, clutching in his hand the sharppointed, silver-handled Venetian stiletto he had seized from a drawer in his desk. He had often before used it to cut the pages of love-filled romances or dainty envelopes, monogramed or crested, and addressed in feminine chirography. More than one woman had put her heart in those envelopes, which he had carelessly opened with that keen-edged souvenir of Italian

He opened the bedroom door, cautiously. His slippered feet made no sound. The light had been left burning, and his wife had thrown one arm over her face to shield it. But the ears of love are sharp and, as he bent over her, she opened her eyes—ah,

those beautiful eyes!

"Bleeker, why do you sit up so late?" He shut his teeth hard and raised his hand high in the air.

In that supreme moment she seemed

to divine everything.
"I am innocent!" she cried, pierc-"I have never committed a crime. Stop! For the child's sake, if not for mine—your innocent child!'

His right arm dropped, in his sudden partial restoration to reason; a vast wonder, shame, remorse, love, shone on his face. He threw the stiletto from him, and fell on his knees by her side.

Bleeker Van Dorn's strange quest was ended. He had found his longsought, new sensation.



THE DYSPEPTIC

E dined, not wisely, but too well— Hence all his ills; And nothing now agrees with him Excepting pills.



NO TIME TO LOSE

RUSHE—I wish my work to live after me. PENN—Well, you'd better hurry up and die.

THE ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT

By Ethel M. Kelley

I AM as one who walks apart,
Immune from minor cares.
I pray before the altar, Art—
And copy off my prayers.
It is my privilege to frown;
And, if I do not choose,
I do not pin my shirt-waist down;
I do not tie my shoes.
My soul would soar, and why should I
Keep its proud pinions pent?
Ye grovelers, make way for my
Artistic temperament!

I suffer from a twisted phrase;
A split infinitive
Will make me wonder many days
How in this world I live!
My feelings come so thick and fast
'Tis strange I do not smother;
No sooner one emotion past,
I straightway have another.
I sit and gaze into the sky,
Exquisitely content;
Step softly, lest you joggle my
Artistic temperament.

The relativity of things
Receives my close attention.

My soul has found its eager wings,
And daily makes ascension.

Reposing here on nature's breast,
As one who "also serves,"

I do not think of money lest
It grate upon my nerves.

I cannot figure all that I
Have borrowed and have spent.

Such mundane thoughts would damage my
Artistic temperament.

I am as one who stands within
The holy place of holies;
And no man else may venture in
Who can't tell what his soul is!

I think in sonnets, symphonies;
And I am one who hears
The conversation of the seas,
The murmur of the spheres.
And, when my Pegasus I fly
I am so eloquent,
I am amazed myself at my
Artistic temperament!



AN AUTUMN IDYLL

COUNT HONORE DE BONNEVILLE and his beautiful American wife had been wedded but a few weeks. On this perfect Autumn night in Southern France, they lingered in a Lwn seat before the ancestral château and watched the stars, the twinkling lights on the placid river and the tender young moon that peeped timidly through the tree-tops. The wife's slender hands were clasped closely in those of her husband, and he bent above her fondly, pleading in whispers, passionately.

"Dear heart, my beautiful bride, do not say me nay!"

His face was close to hers, his lips almost touching her purk ear. Stray curls brushed his forehead. The night, the proximity of the beautiful woman, intoxicated him. The blood throbbed in his temples and he breathed quickly. Drawing her closer, he whispered:

"My love, why can you not feel as I do? Consider, you are my wife; we are young—this is the time for us to enjoy our lives to the utmost. How can

you hesitate?"

She was plainly moved. She leaned yet closer; her soft cheek touched his an instant, and then, turning her head, their lips met in a long kiss. With flushed face she smiled into his eyes—and yielded.

"Dearest," she murmured, "how can I resist you?"

Then, suddenly, her cooler judgment reasserted itself, and she spoke calmly and decidedly, but, withal, kindly:

"It shall be as you urge—this time."

Drawing from her bosom a package, she removed a rubber band and continued:

"Here are ten dollars. You will have to make that last until the fifteenth. In this, the first month of our married life, you have overdrawn your allowance seventeen dollars and twenty-seven cents. Don't let it occur again."

Wildly he strained her to him. The tender young moon, stealing one last

timid glance through the tree-trunks, set with a plunk.

H. G.



A SQUELCHER

HE—I don't propose to make a fool of myself for any woman. She—Then I wouldn't propose at all, if I were you.

THE POWER OF FLATTERY

By Violet Clarke

SCENE—A hat-shop in the Rue
—, Paris. Enter Mrs. and
Miss Brown. Mrs. Brown, a
stout, red-faced woman, is talking eagerly to Miss Brown, a very plain,
sallow-faced girl, with prominent teeth.

MRS. BROWN—Now, mind, I don't wish to spend much money. Of course, it would be silly to come away from Paris without buying one hat; but if you get a nice little toque and I get a bonnet, it will be quite sufficient, and I should think we ought to get them for about sixty francs.

Miss Brown—Oh, yes, mamma; it is no good filling up our boxes with hats; one each will be quite enough.

MRS. BROWN (to ATTENDANT who comes bustling forward)—Parlez vous l'Anglais?

ATTENDANT—Yes, madame.

MRS. BROWN—Ah, that's a comfort! Well, now, I should like to look at a toque for this young lady and a bonnet for myself, but I don't wish anything expensive.

Miss Brown (taking off her sailor hat and disclosing her hair drawn tightly off her face into a small, hard knob at the back of her head)—Mamma, do look at that lovely pink chiffon hat over there. Oh! and isn't that white one with feathers charming? (gazing around in delight). I feel I could buy up the whole shop.

MRS. BROWN (warming up considerably)—Certainly there are some very pretty things. French taste is always so good.

ATTENDANT (coming up with hats of various forms and colors, and putting a fluffy light-blue one on Miss Brown's head)—Ah! zat suit made-

moiselle to perfection! Tenez, regardez! (She hands her a mirror. A smile of satisfaction spreads over Miss Brown's countenance.)

Miss Brown—Yes, I like that very

much; what is the price?

ATTENDANT (with a deprecatory gesture)—Oh, zat very cheap—only sixty francs!

Mrs. Brown (after a slight pause, hesitatingly)—It is rather more than

I thought of giving.

ATTENDANT (volubly and rather reproachfully)—Oh, mais, madame, it is so lovely; you could not get anysing more cheap in all Paris, et regardez comme c'est bien fini. Ze stuff is so good. (She proceeds at great length to explain that the chiffon is of an extra superior quality, that the straw is a very expensive one, and that even the few paste pins are different and infinitely better than those to be had anywhere else. Mrs. Brown feels vaguely that sixty francs is a large sum to give for a little blue chiffon on a plain straw hat; but she is crushed by the Attendant's volubility, and thinks that it would be beneath her dignity to argue about the price.)

MRS. BROWN—Ye-e-s, of course, it is very good; but will you show us some others, please? (The ATTENDANT perches an erection of pink and gold on MISS BROWN'S head and steps back to regard it ecstatically.)

ATTENDANT — Oh, mademoiselle, cela vous va divinement bien. Look, madame! (turning to Mrs. Brown) 'ow charming! Ah, zat is ze 'at for mademoiselle!

Miss Brown contemplates herself in the glass. Can it be possible that this really suits her? Is it only the effect of the glass that makes her appear so very sallow and so painfully like a skinned rabbit? It must be the fault of the glass, for the ATTENDANT'S voice is ringing in her ears.

ATTENDANT—Ah, mademoiselle look so pretty! Mon Dieu, que c'est joli! Nozzing can be better. (Only too willingly is Miss Brown convinced that she looks charming. Mrs. Brown is so unused to hearing her daughter called pretty that she decides at once to have the hat.)

Mrs. Brown—Yes, I think we will have that one. What is the price,

please?

ATTENDANT—A mere nozzing. Regardez 'ow beautiful is ze gold; it last you one, two years, et puis, it be in ze fashion for a long time; it ze dernier cri. And mademoiselle is so charmante in it! You will take it, madame? Bien. (She puts it aside.)

A slight flush of pleasure has come to Miss Brown's face; perhaps, after all, she is not so plain, and it is only the bad taste of English milliners that fails to show off her good looks. Mrs. Brown is so pleased that she quite forgets to insist on knowing the price.

ATTENDANT (producing a little white toque)—Tenez, madame, zis also for mademoiselle. (She deposits it daintily on Miss Brown's head.)

Mrs. Brown (beginning feebly)—

No. I don't think——

ATTENDANT (interrupting)—C'est délicieux, and so sheap. Ah, madame, it a—what you say in English?—a bargain? And it suit mademoiselle so well. Ah, ce que c'est d'être jeune et jolie! (Sighing deeply with her fat hands on her hips.) Everysing suit mademoiselle.

MRS. BROWN weakly nods assent, and this hat also is put one side.

ATTENDANT—And now, just a little chapeau de voyage?

MRS. BROWN—No, really we don't wish——

ATTENDANT—Oh, but somesing quite cheap, quite simple! I 'ave just ze sing. (She produces a straw hat turned up in front. It does not suit Miss Brown, as her hair is very thin

on the temples; but this thought has not time to strike her, for the ATTENDANT chattering rapidly.) Charming, charming! Oh, que c'est chic! well mademoiselle do her hair! En générale ze Engleesh se coiffent si mal; but mademoiselle is an exception elle a l'air tout à fait Française. Mademoiselle will take ze 'at? Yes? (She whisks it one side before Mrs. Brown can open her lips, and continues, hurriedly.) And now, madame want a bonnet? Parfaitement. carefully removes Mrs. Brown's bonnet.) But zis is too old for madame. (Looking at it disapprovingly.) She want somesing more *chic*, more young. I 'ave just ze sing. (She tries on an erection of red roses and black feathers.) Ah, mon Dieu! How distinguée madame look in zat! Oh, how rare it is to 'ave two ladies who look pretty in everysing! Madame's friends will not know her in zat 'at.

MRS. BROWN (who has been surveying her red and elderly countenance in the glass)—But don't you think it is a little young for me? Wouldn't a bonnet be better?

ATTENDANT—Oh, but, madame, du tout! du tout! Madame is so very younglooking; it suit madame to perfection. But if madame like to 'ave a little bonnet also, I show her some; but madame cannot always wear a bonnet. It not so chic, and she never get anysing to suit her so well as ze 'at; but, perhaps it be good to 'ave a bonnet as well (hoisting a smart green and gold bonnet on her hand). Zis ze very sing for you, madame, and so fashionable. Ah, cela vous va à merveille! (In a conclusive You take zis? (She adds it to tone.) the accumulating pile of hats.) And what more can I get madame? 'ave a black hat to suit her to perfection.

MRS. BROWN feels she must be firm, and gently declines anything further in the shape of headgear. Both she and MISS BROWN are in such a whirl, and so dazzled with their enforced purchases, that they hardly know if they are standing on their heads or their feet; however, they pull themselves together suf-

ficiently to ask how much there is to

pay.

ATTENDANT — Oh, never mind, madame. I send ze bill wiz ze 'ats. (With a bewitching smile.) Madame can pay when she pass again, tomorrow, next week, any time. It be a mere nozzing. (With a wave of her hand.) Allez, I trust madame. (Showing them to the door.) Bon jour, mesdames! (She bows them out and calls after them.) I put you in some veils to match ze 'ats, madame.

MRS. BROWN—How very civil French people are! They seem so anxious to please one. Dear me! I believe all the reports of their hatred of the English are quite untrue. Our ways are very brusque compared to

theirs.

Miss Brown (very much elated)—Really, the hats are lovely! I am so glad we came to this shop.

II

Scene—Hôtel de la —, Paris, the next day. Mrs. and Miss Brown unpacking the hats and trying them on before the mirror.

MRS. BROWN (in a dissatisfied voice)

—Really, this bonnet is ridiculously
young for me. I don't like it at all,
and I am sure your father won't.

MISS BROWN—Surely, mamma, this pink hat makes me look very sallow. I wish I had not bought it. Pink never does suit me, but the woman was so positive I looked nice in it.

MRS. BROWN—Now, that I examine the bonnet closely, the feathers seem very common; they look quite different from the way they did yesterday

by electric light.

Miss Brown (almost tearfully)—Really, this hat turned up in front makes me look almost bald! And, oh, mamma, the blue-chiffon one is not fresh-looking at all by daylight, and the woman said it was quite new. How disappointing! What shall we do?

MRS. BROWN (irritably)—Really, I had no idea we had bought so many

hats! How are we to get them all home?

MISS BROWN (ruefully looking them over)—After all, I think that woman was a fraud. This white toque won't keep straight on my head, I told her it wouldn't, and she said it would be all right when I pinned it on; but it isn't. I wish we hadn't gone to that shop.

MRS. BROWN (with a screech)—Good heavens! Oh, my goodness! Whatever shall I do? What will your father say? Look at the bill! (She collapses on the sofa, and MISS BROWN picks up the bill which has fallen to the

ground.)

Miss Brown (gasping)—Oh-h-h! (Dead silence; then she reads:)

	Francs
Blue chiffon hat	 . 60
Pink hat	 . 150
Straw hat	
White toque	 . 100
Bonnet	 . 80
Hat with feathers	
Veils	 20
Total	4
Total	 · U75

Six hundred and seventy-five francs! Oh, mamma! They are not worth a quarter of the money.

MRS. BROWN (with unnecessary sharpness)—Can't you see that it says on the bill that purchases cannot be exchanged?

Miss Brown (after a painful pause)
—I think I prefer English shops.

MRS. BROWN—It was all that ridiculous flattery (with an uncomfortable feeling that she was beguiled by it herself). It's just like a silly girl to listen to it.

Miss Brown (in tears)—But, mamma, I—

MRS. BROWN—Don't argue with me. I am sure I don't know what your father will think; and how to get the wretched things home, I don't know; they will be the greatest nuisance on the journey. Well, I've learned my lesson. No more Paris hats for me. English ones are good enough for anybody; at any rate, they ought to be!



PERIHELION

THE starry mazes of the skies
No secrets have from her;
In planet-lore she is so wise,
My sweet astronomer.

I drop sly hints, when forth we fare To view the worlds above; I speak of Venus, pale and rare, The evening star of Love.

On Saturn, she declares, she dotes, And I at nuptial things Am hinting, when I hope she notes His charm is due to rings.

The double-stars I much prefer (They're not alone o' nights); And now that I've persuaded her To take up satellites,

The heavens with new glory teem,
For she has promised soon
To study that delightful theme,
The glowing honeymoon!

FRANK ROE BATCHELDER.



MELLOW

NODD—My wife actually cried when she saw my condition last night.
TODD—How did that affect you?
"I also burst into tears."



DIAGNOSED

DASHAWAY—I can't make up my mind whether I really love her or not.

CLEVERTON—I'll tell you an unmistakable sign.

"What's that?"

"If it's real, genuine love, you'll want to lend money to your friends."

THEY THAT KNEW THE LAW

By Bertrand W. Babcock

THEY were dining in the little restaurant that each called bohemian because of the presence of the other.

"The people who eat here are rather sordid," the man said, "but apart from that——"

With quick comprehension the woman interrupted: "Make no apologies for the place; we create our own environment."

It was rather a silent meal for these two, until near its close. The woman had just learned that her publishers would not pay the price she had expected for her manuscripts. She earned her living by her pen, and so she was rather mournful. As for the man, he was living in a state of anxious ecstasy. For two weeks he had not put pen to paper. There was room in his soul now for but one ambition—to conquer the soul of this woman.

"He who wins your love," he said, half in whisper, "has only to die. For

him earth holds no more.'

The girl looked at him with a passing shadow in her eyes. "I really believe I am beginning to love you—" she began, softly.

From the next table there came the roar of vapid laughter. A heavy youth with the sharp features of the commercial Jew was dining there with two faded blondes.

"I tell you it's the best show on Broadway; knocks the Metropolitan Opera House higher than a kite," was the sentiment to which the blondes enthusiastically assented.

With shuddering timidity the girl

drew nearer the man.

"To think that such people as that

should have the wealth of this earth, while you and I——"

The man interrupted: "But you were saying that you were beginning to—"

"I didn't mean it, though; and, besides, I'm not good enough. Just now I was in my tenderest mood, when those people there called me back to my real self. I'm not good enough—I'm not what you think me. I am fond of pretty things—of clothes, for instance. I should like to have wealth just for its material sake. I should like to be beautiful—"

"You are beautiful," murmured the

"—just because of the admiration I could command," went on the woman. "You men are all alike; that woman over there is the sort you are drawn by—heavy, sensuous, vapid, but beautiful in a way."

"Marry me!" insisted the man.

"But I don't know that I love you, and I'm not at all sure that I believe in marriage. Sometimes, it seems to me that, in common with all religious practices, it's only a form to keep the lesser intelligence from sinning. We who know the ultimate of the law may disregard it."

The man was not shocked. Instead, he looked thoughtfully at the woman. "I don't say that I believe in marriage," he said, slowly; then, with words that came faster: "but I do believe in you.

Marry me!"

"We should be very foolish to marry now. Think of it! We both are at the beginning of something. Each of us has attained a little; enough to show us that there is something beyond. You cannot say now that, after your play comes out and is, perhaps, a big success, you'll be the same man. Its success, even its failure, will change your whole course of thought. You will not like the same things, the same people. No man with unattained ambition is sane. You may even not like me." She gave him a quick glance, then looked down.

"Always and ever," the man whispered. "There's only one thing I can

say——"

"Don't say it," commandingly.

"I won't, then."

A pause.

"You may if you wish," demurely.

"I love you."

"Don't be so foolish. You and I are growing. Now we are in obscurity we are natural. We have done our work. Your play and my novel are written and disposed of. We have only to wait for their public appearance. It has been a restful, delightful interval. Don't let's spoil it now by doing anything which, when we are changed, as we shall be when we appear before the public, we'll regret. I shouldn't dare marry yet; I shall change. I don't know what I'll be like in a few months. Now, are you convinced?"

"No."

"You're not convinced?"

"No"

"I don't know that I am entirely convinced." The woman's voice was

softening.

"Life together would be delightful," the man continued. "We are interested in the same things, we have the same ambitions, and as for living—well, we couldn't have more than a modest little place at first, but here in town we could have a little apartment—"

"And such a pretty little apartment we could make it, with your pictures and my books, couldn't we?" said the woman, her cheeks flushing. Then,

bethinking herself, she stopped.

The man went on: "We could each have separate work-rooms. Every morning, just before we settled down to our writing, we'd have little conversations—not very long, of course, just long enough to let each

know that the other sympathized with his effort. Then, cheerful and in-

spired, we'd go to our work."

"Yes, yes," the woman broke in; "and to each of us the thought of the other working there, not very far away, would be a spur. We'd give our best effort to our work, but even in the midst of it neither of us would ever be entirely unconscious of the other's personality and love."

The woman stopped, her hand laid in emphasis on the table. Gently and reverently the man put his own over it. There was expectation in the look that each gave the other. The man's whole being breathed out a longing that the woman felt. Then he spoke:

"Will you do it?"

The woman trembled.

"Ye-es," she faltered.

A splintering of glass, followed by incoherent laughter, sounded from the near-by table.

"You can bet I'm no lulu bird," sharply exclaimed one of the blondes.

Convulsively, the woman tore away her hands. "No, no, no!" she almost sobbed.

The man realized sharply that he had lost her mood. "Dearest," he insisted, "you know I love and respect you beyond the whole world. You were beginning to see what it would mean to us. Come, now, quickly, before your best, your true mood is gone. Come! The Little Church Around the Corner isn't far. Come now, to-night. Come!"

The woman was shivering; there were tears in her eyes. "No, no, I tell you, I won't," she said, decisively.

"But, dearest, defer to my mood just a little. Let's go to the Little Church——"

"No, I won't."

"But not to marry. You were in the mood of your highest nature just now. Let us go there, to the church. We won't go in. Let us go only to stand outside in the darkness and look at the place where we might have been married; just to the church door. It's a concession to my mood and a monument to yours. Will you

go?"

Abruptly the woman arose. Quickly he put her cloak about her. Then, clinging to his arm, she went with him. As they passed the next table, the two women looked curiously at her.

"Rather odd-looking girl; pretty, though, don't you think?" asked the

man.

"Yes, but she's got a look in her eyes I don't like," answered one of the women.

Without, the man and woman hurried through the dripping side-streets. The hard glare of the lights was softened and shattered by the diffusing wet of the pavements. The gleam of the colored lights found its reflection under foot. A damp wind made swinging signs overhead creak. The hoofs of hurrying cab-horses sounded indistinct and crunching on the wet asphalt. The two hastened silently on toward the Avenue. Suddenly, the man's free hand sought the woman's arm.

"Look!" he whispered.

Turning sharply, she found herself before a church set back from the street. From the bare, swaying limbs of trees water dripped. Through a picturesque lich-gate the wind moaned regretfully. Back, behind the trees, the low church building rose blackly insistent.

The woman no longer thought of anything. She moved passively at the touch of the man, whose arm

indicated a forward path.

At the oaken door the man stopped; with a quick gesture he uncovered his head; his hand sought the door-knob; the door swung open to his hesitating, fumbling movement; he stretched out his arms.

"Come," he said.

The woman took a step forward, then stopped, raising her face to his. She lowered her eyes; her lips moved.

"Why need there be any ceremony?"

she said, faintly.

With a sharp jolt, whose sudden stopping of forward motion seemed to

mark to those within the beginning of an epoch, the carriage that had brought two silent people from Graytown's railroad station drew up before the door of a pleasant country house.

Even before the carriage stopped, Clyde Swinton heard the swift patter of little feet down the veranda steps and then along the walk to the street. Great as was the dignity of Mrs. Swinton upon the extraordinary occasions of the gathering together of Graytown's leading social set, she could never wait for the carriage to stop when Clyde came home. The son could not see the mother when first he heard her footsteps, but the little patter set suddenly before him, as even the presence of death had failed to do, the whole course of his youth and early manhood. When, as a boy, he had returned from college, no matter how late the hour, those same little footfalls had tripped out to him their story of love. So it had been later when, as a man, he had come to the place—embittered by the constant flitting of his ambition to a plane always beyond his reach, to seek a little rest from the world, before again going out to have hope deferred. And those delicate beats had always smitten his heart and conscience.

"Here is love, here is solace," he had told himself then. "Is it worth while to put away all these things, simply for the sake of an ambition?"

Now, as he heard the footfalls, there was a note of poignant reproach in their sound. They came to him with a welcome, glad in a hope he had falsely stirred. He was about to deceive his mother's love. All that she had wished him to be came now, and sat on his conscience, to mock him with all that he knew he was. His head sank upon his hands.

Suddenly, he looked at the woman who accompanied him. Did she appreciate his feeling at this moment?

A smile, inscrutable, but fraught with a subtle suggestion of an ulterior intelligence, answered him.

"I think, Clyde," she said, "some

one's coming to meet you. You'd

better get out now."

He shuddered. Then, with the courage of a conscience at bay, he opened the door. Down the last of the steps to the street a little form rushed. Two arms put themselves in the old way about his neck.

"My dear, good, good boy!"

Clyde trembled. "We got the clippings and newspapers all right. You don't know, Clyde dear, how proud we are all of you. To think of little Clyde being a great playwright! You know, dear, one of those critics called you 'the great coming exponent of American national life.' But—"she stopped, looking wistfully at the carriage, then continued, quickly—"but your wife, Clyde! Here I'm running on in this way, forgetting—""

"Yes, yes, my wife."

Clyde turned to the carriage and stretched out a hand into its interior. The woman, taking it, stepped to the street. Clyde looked at her amazed. In her face were tense lines that seemed to add years to her age; she had steeled herself against a great emotion. When Clyde spoke, neither of the women heard him.

"Mother, this is my wife."

The two stood staring silently at each other. The glance of the mother sought the soul of the woman her son had called his wife. The regard of the other strove forcefully to repel the penetration of love; she was on guard. To Clyde the stillness seemed oppressively long.

The mother held out her hand.

"I think I am going to like you," she said, with little conviction of manner.

"Now, Clyde, Mary wants to see you," his mother told him in the hall-way; "she's made a lot of those dear little biscuit you used to like so when you were a boy. Run along now to the kitchen, and I'll look after your—after Frances."

Glad of the opportunity to recover himself, Clyde hurried away. The two women went up the stairway together to the guest-chamber. Frances's baggage had gone before, and now she began silently to tumble the contents of Clyde's suit-case on the bed. A number of books slid out among the brushes and cosmetics.

A sharp cry of prolonged delight came from Clyde's mother. Frances turned, peevishly. Would they never leave her alone? She must cry soon; she could not restrain herself forever. Clyde's mother held one of the books in her hand.

"Oh, 'Arla, An Annal of Love, by Frances Estep,'" she read from the title-page. "'To Clyde's mother, with love.' My dear, did you write 'Arla'? Clyde told me you were an author, but I didn't know you wrote 'Arla.' And you wrote those wonderful things! Why, I wept and was delightfully happy over that book. And you meant that copy for me—for me?"

Frances felt that unnatural hardness within her dissolving into a tenderer emotion. "For you, dear mother," she faltered.

The older woman, putting her arms about the girl, drew her down on the bed and kissed her. Controlling herself no longer, Frances rested her face on the bosom of the other; bitter sobs convulsed her. The mother comforted.

"There! there!" she said, when Frances was quieter. "It was the most natural thing in the world that you should cry. Everything's so new and strange here, but we'll soon become used to each other. And I wasn't sure that I was going to love you—you don't know how jealous a foolish mother can be!"

"Will you love me now?" asked Frances.

And the older woman kissed her for answer. "You will be good to Clyde, won't you?" she asked, putting her handkerchief to the tears still glistening on the girl's cheek.

"I never had a mother," said Frances, abruptly. Then, releasing herself, she sat up. "There's something I must tell you—" she began.

The mother shook her head. "Not now, Frances. You see, I have called you 'Frances.' On this first day you must not act too much on your overwrought impulses. But I wish to say something to you in the seriousness of my new love for you."

The girl nestled back beside her. "Say on." She spoke almost gaily,

in hysterical reaction.

The older woman took her hand, playing in delicate affection with the

soft little fingers.

"I'm not very well, Frances. I don't wish Clyde to know anything about it, but I've been in bed pretty much of the past week. The doctor told me this morning that I mustn't think of getting up, but, you know, Clyde—you and Clyde were coming." She paused. Frances pressed her hand. And then the mother said, softly: "I don't think I'll be long with you."

"No, no; don't say that, mother."

"And I want you to be good to Clyde, if anything happens. He's the best boy in the world. You know, I've always been bound up in him. It has been my dearest ambition—not that Clyde should succeed, I knew he'd do that—but that he should marry a good woman; and, Frances, dear, I am ready for anything, now that he has; my heart has its desire. You will—you will be a good wife to him, Frances?"

"I will be to him all that a good

wife should," Frances said.

That night, alone in their room, a constraint that neither Clyde nor Frances had felt before came upon them. Clyde, conscious of the fixed regard of Frances, did not once meet her eyes. Instead, he fumbled over some manuscripts, fussily and to no purpose.

"Do you know," he said, at last, without looking up from the type-written pages before him, "do you know that you two made a very pretty

stage picture this morning?"

Frances was silent.

"Very pretty," he went on, hastily,

in confusion, "the mother welcoming the bride—"

"'The bride!'" the girl echoed, in a bitterness that sank into her own soul as into his, "'the bride!' I tell you, Clyde Swinton, if I thought that it were not, as you said, due to the prattle of a mutual friend that your mother learned of our being together, and invited you and your wife to visit her, if I thought that you had deliberately introduced me to your mother as your wife, I should——"

"Do what?"

But she remained silent.

Early in the morning, a sudden knock at the door of the bed-chamber startled Clyde.

"What is it?" he demanded.

"I think, Mr. Clyde, you had better get up. Your mother is very ill, sir."

The grave tones of the servant filled Clyde with alarm. He dressed quickly. Frances opened her eyes as he unfastened the door.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Nothing; I shall return soon."

Within a few minutes he was back, a somber light in his eyes. He found Frances dressed.

"Come," he said, throwing wide the door.

The girl looked into his face and saw there only a deep sadness. Taking his proffered hand, she went with him. Before a closed door they stopped, while Clyde tapped gently. A man in plain black opened it for them and then stood aside in the hallway. Clyde walked to a great screen standing near the door. With trembling hand he pointed the way to the girl. Dimly feeling the approach of some great sorrow, she passed alone before him. From the bed beyond, a pale face smiled longingly up at her. With a rush the girl knelt at the bedside, burying her face in its coverings.

"Don't! my daughter, don't!" said a gentle voice, in the tone of one who had passed beyond the whole range of human emotion; "don't! See, I

am happy; I smile."

That smile of infinite pity and love

sought through the very vitals of the man. He quailed, moved forward,

then stopped.

"Dear daughter, don't grieve for me," went on the poor, weak voice; "my mission is ended. I have committed the love of my son to his wife. I don't care to live longer. You will remember, you will be good to him!"

From the coverlet the girl lifted

hard, tearless eyes.

"Mother, mother, we have deceived you!" she said, so that only the mother heard; "Clyde and I were never—"

The mother looked again at the kneeling girl. Then, in response to the unspoken entreaty, the girl placed her ear close to the smiling lips.

"My child," said the mother, so that the girl, bending over, scarcely heard,

"I knew!"

One more effort to speak; then:

"Don't tell Clyde I——"

From the rear of the room a cry sounded; Clyde rushed forward.

"Mother! mother!" he cried.

There was no answer from the bed. He looked up from the rigid figure there to the girl standing at the bedside. His eyes found in hers only horror and repulsion.

"Frances," he whispered.

The girl's lips made no movement. Silently, as before, she stared at him.

"Frances!"

Still the girl regarded him, silent-

Abruptly the man bowed his head and left her, still standing there beside the bed.

It was dark within the Swinton residence, and outside the rain poured down from a black heaven when, groping his way in the blindness of emotion, Clyde sought his room. At the door his trembling hand rested on the knob.

"To-morrow, to-morrow, ever tomorrow, my curse. It shall be to-day, now, this instant," he muttered, pressing one shaking hand to the weight that was bearing down on his brain.

"Frances," he called, softly.

The swirling swish of the driving

rain against the corridor window reached him as he waited.

"Frances!"

A bough of the big oak outside, snapped by the wind, dropped to the gravel walk.

"Frances, Frances! You,

too!'

He clutched at the door-knob. It slipped from his nervous effort. With an oath he forced the door open. Through the open window the storm rushed to meet him. He groped about the disordered room, calling in tones unfamiliar to him, "Frances!"

No one was there.

Across the floor, wet from the rain, a white paper came, blown by the rushing wind. He watched it, unable to move. Nearer and nearer it came, until, at a sharper blast from outside, it stopped, quivering, at his feet. The man started back, then rushed to take it up. He carried it to the still open window. It contained one word, in Frances's writing, "Good-bye."

An hour later they found him lying close by the window, his head wet

with the rain.

Upon her return trip, Frances Estep remained in New York but the portion of a day, just long enough to arrange some business with her publishers.

"I had agreed to write that novel," she told them; "you thought my style might gloss over the enormities of the

theme."

"Yes, and we'll give you a cheque now."

"I do not care to undertake it just yet," the girl said, deliberately; "nor at any other time."

The senior partner shrugged his shoulders; then he whistled. "Very well," he decided; "perhaps it's better as it is. You're not looking at all well, Miss Estep."

"I have just lost a very dear relative," answered the girl, wincing at all that the words meant and recalled.

It was some time after this that the critics made their great discovery. The open-hearted and delightfully sentimental Frances Estep was striving

after an effect foreign to her person-

ality.

"The broad and deep personality," wrote one of them, "that divested vice and virtue alike of any ulterior ethical significance and gave to us pictures of life in which no conscious effort was made to point a moral, has become restricted and contracted. The girl who saw life as it is and gave it to us, as she saw it, not really knowing life's significance, is striving after moral effects. Frances Estep rebukes vice and pats virtue on the head in just as serious and, it may be added, in just as inartistic fashion, as ever did author of howling, roaring melodrama. Has some one said to Frances Estep, 'You are a bad little girl; be good and write Sunday-school books'?"

Such criticism found appreciation and reading all over the country among the disappointed folk who were familiar with the later works of the author of "Arla, An Annal of Love." Frances colored when she read it. For weeks past she had destroyed the art of her method, feeling herself a murderess, but declaring to herself that concession to the moral order must be made by even a popular author.

"Now, Vice, be rebuked, and, Virtue, take thy reward," she would say, in pathetic humor, as she married off to his dull rival some heroine, who by all the laws of psychology and art should have wedded "the lovely wicked man."

For months Frances lived alone in a little town up the Hudson. At first the horror of that day never left her, in the sunshine or near the sparkling water. Then, as she threw herself into her work and lived in vivid companionship with her characters, she thought no more of the awful pathos of that mother's death. Once she caught herself mentally arranging the scene for description. Then she knew that its personal horror for her was gone, that finally it would appeal to her only as art.

Against Clyde she had no resentment. She had given herself to him freely; but so little had she, during her fife, regarded the conventions which

shackled others, that there was not in her soul that sense of defilement and personal unworthiness that would have oppressed a woman whose very fibres convention had enmeshed. She looked. on Clyde simply as a lover from whom she had separated, just as any girl separates from a sweetheart—for some feminine reason. She had too little in common with ordinary natures to realize the meaning of the term husband. In the biography that a great man wrote of her, years later, it was said that her moral nature was undeveloped. Vice and sin shocked her just as did the suffering of those dear to her, but for her they had no moral value. So, after the first horror of that tragedy had passed, there was no reproach in her soul.

She had not returned to New York after that first day. Her publishers, jealous of possible rivals, had taken her later stories as soon as they were written. Whenever they desired to be in more immediate relation with her, one of them went to the little town where she hid herself. She had given them strict injunction to reveal her whereabouts to no one.

Of Clyde she never heard in these days. She knew that he was doing no work, for the papers told of the production of no more Clyde Swinton plays. As for herself, at the end of some months, she was beginning to hope that as new characters stalked through her imagination she would forget the one man who, alone of the myriad men of her fancy's creation, had been real to her. Finally, she came gladly to the point where she told herself that the impression left by his personality was more dim by far than that of the latest of her created characters.

"I am very happy over it," she told herself.

It was Munster, the junior partner, however, who brought it all back—Munster, who came just a little oftener than he could give reasonable excuse for, Munster, whom she had been obliged to snub severely on several occasions.

"Oh, by the way," he said, "that fellow Swinton's been around again. Keeps coming and wants your address; fairly haunts the street; seems to think that you'll show up there. And they say he's gone mad lately. Since the production of that play of his, all the managers in New York and on the other side, too, I hear, have been running after him. Though they offer big figures he won't sign to write them a thing. Mad, don't you think?"

After the voluble little man had gone, Frances felt something rising in

revolt.

"Pshaw, but I don't wish to see him," she told herself, making an effort to think no more of Swinton.

She occupied herself in putting the last touches to some work nearly completed. In the middle of the afternoon she was surprised that she had accomplished so little.

"I know what's the matter," she told herself, in exasperation; "I've been mured up here too long; I'm going down to the city just for the night."

'You needn't blush, you silly thing," she said, catching a glimpse of herself in a mirror; "you aren't going to

It was well past her usual dinnerhour when she finished the shopping that she had tried to make herself believe was the real reason for her She had devoted her whole energy and mind to it.

When she had bought all that her time and money would permit, she found herself near Twenty-eighth street.

"Where shall I eat?" she asked herself. "Oh, I know a place. We used to go there. I don't think there's any chance of meeting him; at least, I hope not; but why should I allow any man to deprive me of New York?"

For all her stoicism, it was with a beating heart that she passed beneath the brightly-lighted portico. Their old waiter knew her at once. He conducted her to their old table.

"Shall I lay the table for two?" he

asked.

"No—why, yes," she answered.

"I'll dine with his memory" she added to herself.

"Inanimate things hold no associations for us," she had once declared, thinking that she believed it. Now, as she sat there, not seeing the other people, a flood of memory rose and beat upon the doors of her heart. The place was replete with Clyde's personality. But she struggled against herself and against all that these things held for her.

"No, I won't wait. Just serve me,"

she ordered the waiter.

For some reason the food did not taste as she thought it would. She had finally abandoned a valiant effort upon a filet mignon when laughter at a near-by table aroused her. Over there, just beyond, the Jew was sitting with his two blonde friends.

But there was some one else there a tall man with pale, thin face, who sat opposite one of the blondes, listening politely but absently to the conversation. Had he come down to the level of these? Sharp resentment filled her.

Then she knew he saw her.

"Excuse me," she heard him say, "but some one is here whom I expected."

He crossed to her table.

"May I help you?" he asked, as though he had been separated from her but a moment.

"Who are those vile people over there?" she demanded.

Hope came into his face.

"Oh, a theatrical manager and some of his leading people that I happen to know," he replied, eagerly.

"Really, it doesn't matter.

During the remainder of that meal the woman steadily repressed any conversational effort on his part. After their coffee he stood up without a word and put her cloak about her shoulders.

"Come!" he said.

Silently she followed. As they passed the Jew's table, one of the women looked at her with a new interest.

"That look's gone from her face," she said; "she is going to a great happiness."

"Great happiness! look in her face!" repeated the man; "what do you know about it?"

The woman laughed, scornfully.
"Everything. In spite of all, I'm
still a woman."

Outside, Clyde put Frances into a cab and stepped in himself. Then he leaned out his head.

"To the Little Church Around the Corner," he told the cabman.



THE ETIQUETTE OF ART CRITICISM

BEING A FEW RULES TO ENABLE THE UNINFORMED TO PASS FOR CONNOIS-SEURS WHEN VIEWING AN EXHIBITION OF PICTURES

RULE 1.—Always admire a Whistler.

RULE 2.—If you are introduced to an artist, it is no longer considered one of the essentials of good form to talk to him about his own work. If you will lead up to the subject discreetly, he will save you the trouble.

Rule 3.—It is equally important to avoid admiring anything because "it looks natural." It is safer to scorn all such works as being "photographic."

Rule 4.—If you wish to direct attention to any particular picture, point with the thumb instead of with the finger. Though the fact is not widely known, most artists acquire this habit, probably from the constant use of the thumb in manipulating paint or charcoal. To the knowing ones, the use of this characteristic gesture will at once place you in the inner circle.

Rule 5.—To complete the true professional pose when examining a work of art, it is necessary to throw the head very much on one side and gaze at the picture through half-closed eyes. Next, look at the painting through the

small opening that is left when the hand is loosely closed. The picture will not show to any better advantage when seen through the hand, and artists rarely adopt this method; but it is one of those ancient superstitions that the veteran connoisseur clings to, and the novice will, therefore, regard it as an essential.

RULE 6.—When hard pressed for some comment, you can always fall back on the word "interesting." There is something exceedingly professional about this word. It is the haven of refuge of many distinguished critics when describing execrable works by their friends, or by the chief officers of important art organizations.

Rule 7.—Interlard your conversation with a plentiful sprinkling of such art terms as chiaroscuro, morbidezza, verve, tonality, motif, impasto, milieu, atmosphere and the like. Even if you do not use them correctly, it will not matter, as they belong to the lingo of the professional critic, and even artists have but a vague idea of their meaning.

E. L. W.



A REQUEST

HUSBAND—I can't think of any one whom you get things from that we don't owe money to.
Wife—If you do, let me know.

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UNDER ALL SKIES

NOW that dear Love, in whom we so rejoice, Leads gaily on where favoring breezes blow, Skies smile, flowers bloom, and cool, still waters flow, Right glad are we to be his happy choice, Clasp his fond hands and listen to his voice.

But always 'tis Love's lot some day to go
Through dreary desert wastes, some day to meet
Life's hunger and its thirst, its cold and heat;
To be on blinding winds tossed to and fro;
Now, tell me, shall we walk with Love or no?

When we, love-led, have reached the desert land,
The land of fierce heat, yea, and fiercer frost,
Whose dreary desolation must be crossed,
Where storm clouds gather like an armèd band,
Then, think you, dear, we will let go Love's hand?

Lift up your eyes! words are of little worth;
Ah! you are brave, daring so much to lose,
And you are wise such perilous gain to choose.
Now, through sweet hyacinth glades, or desert dearth,
We follow on. Lead forth, O Love, lead forth!

CARLOTTA PERRY.



THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

I N days gone by
When she and I
Would drive through leafy lanes,
I begged my Jane,
But all in vain,
To let me hold the reins.

'Twas long ago— Now, to my woe, My vigor slowly wanes; For Jane, you see ('Twixt you and me), Still firmly holds the reins.

McLandburgh Wilson.

A STILL SMALL VOICE

By Emma Wolf

AID Jeffrey: "They are both interesting, and—great friends." "Yes." said Helen; "platonics, you know."

"Pooh!" said he, with a teasing

laugh.

"The real thing," returned the girl,

indignantly.

"But modern," said he. "A dangerous game, remember."

"For some, perhaps."

"But you forget," he laughed,

"The Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady are sisters—under their skins.

"Don't quote your cynicisms to me. That's what this hateful modernity is made of—snatches and patches of pessimisms, catchingly phrased for the weak-minded. If all the world turns bad, it will be because all the fascinating writers of the day are writing badness so fascinatingly into people's potentialities."

"That's an admission. It reminds one of Sargent's pictures—the concealed revealed through art. So literature plays the devil, eh? But we were speaking of platonics."

"No, we were speaking of Mrs.

Heath and John Henshaw."

"Ah, I had forgotten! There is no connection. They are quite safe. beg their pardons."

I should think you would. Take not the name of my goddess in vain."

"Everybody's goddess. She's toast one drinks standing. Mrs. Heath -God bless her!"

"Amen—to that and all further solemnity," said Helen, jumping up. "It's too warm to think. There goes Tom Heath with his racquet, now. I'm going. Will you come?"

The Summer silence fell again about the hotel veranda. A leaf fluttered into the lap of the woman sitting, book in hand, in the little jasmine-covered recess in the angle. She did not move. Her eyes were bent on the page before She did not see it. The dead are no less still.

"Madame! Pardon, pardon, ma-

dame, but-

"Yes, Marie?" She was on her feet, a slender, alert, ready figure. But the maid's face was dim before

"The baby is still restless, madame.

"I will go to him. You need not come."

Her filmy skirts swept over the floor of the veranda. The slender, graceful figure vanished in the doorway.

The room was dark and cool. She closed the door noiselessly, locking it. She moved over and bent down to her child's breathing. It was even and low. But the little hands were hot. They stirred under her light touch, and the child murmured in his sleep. She turned and, without a sound, glided into the chair at the foot of the cradle. Her foot touched the treadle lightly. She began to rock her child with slow, gentle swing.

The room was dark and cool. The woman's still face cut cameo-white through the gloom. Behind the face was chaos. Her eyes were fixed on a spot in the opposite wall. By some perversion of her obsessed senses, it seemed to hold her steady, to direct her, dominate her; a still, sane voice rising out of and above the panic of her dumb, agonized beseechings.

"Take care of me."

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"I will."

"Don't let me do anything horrid."

"You won't."

"Take that hand off my throat."

"There is no hand on your throat." "It is choking me. I can't see.

My eyes are all bloodshot."

"No; they are quite clear." "I wish I were dead."

"You are rocking your baby's cradle, forward and backward, forward and back."

"I love him-I love John Henshaw."

"You are Tom Heath's wife."

"I did not know I loved John Henshaw till now. They told me—just now-out there on the veranda. I love John Henshaw—irrevocably. It came over me like fire-rushing and burning through me—the revelation. Stop it! Stop this knowledge. I will not know it. I am John Henshaw's friend. Tell me-can't you tell me I am only his friend?"

"You are Tom Heath's wife.

loves you; he trusts you."

"Oh, God, set me free!"

"You cannot be freed. Tom Heath loves you—trusts you. You told him you loved him when you married him.

"But I am different now—changed. Help me. I love no one, no one as I love John Henshaw. I have never loved any one before. I know it now. Listen. I—have—no—desire—in all the world—but—to put—my arms about him-now-to-

"You are rocking your baby's

"I would go to hell with him! It

would be heaven."

"Your child is not very well to-day. A mother must take care of her child; and you love yours dearly—very dearly."

"I love John Henshaw. no one else." There is

"You are Tom Heath's wife."

"It is a mistake. I was too young; I did not know what love might be; no one told me. Let me go.'

"You cannot escape your mistake."

"Some do." "Not you."

"Oh, me! Even I. Who am I?"

"A good woman."

"You gibe. Let me go!"

"No."

"Let me go, I say! Marriage is a tyranny."

"Yes."

"I defy it."

"You dare not."

"My God, what can I do?"

"Suffer—"

"I will not."

"-and give no sign."

"I cannot."

"You must."

"Must women suffer like this?"

"Many."

"Why?"

"For the sake of order."

"Order? Let there be chaos—so that I may love him."

"For the sake of the world."

"What is that to me? I am I."

"For the sake of the weak and undisciplined."

"They are nothing to me. should I be a martyr for them?"

"Example — precept — are everything."

"Let me alone. Why should I care? I am not a missionary."

"For the sake of little children."

"Let me be. Am I the keeper of the world?"

"You menace the sanctity of the home."

Sanctity? What "Cant, truism. sanctity can attach itself to a lie?"

"The semblance of sanctity."

"But hell for me."

"You? Who are you?"

"I am a woman—most unhappy."

"You are nothing—in the scheme for the whole."

"Then God is a monster; I renounce Him-hate Him."

"Hush! You are speaking through passion."

"You lie."

"There is no reason in your contention. It is the sophistry of egotistic, elemental passion."

"No, no!"

"Yes."

"But I love him! Love is higher

than passion—higher than elemental passion. It will endure through all things—it will outlast all things—all change—it will outlast life—it will outlast death."

"How do you know that?"

"I know—as I know there are stars above."

"You thought that, when you married Tom Heath?"

"No; I thought of nothing then but the moment. I loved him—with the same depth with which I loved the pearl necklace he clasped about my throat—no more."

"But you thought you would be true to him through life."

"A pure girl never thinks of that."

"She takes it for granted."

"I—I cannot stand this torture."

"You must. How do you know your love for John Henshaw would prove any stronger, if another stronger than he should appear? What if the years again change you?"

"They cannot change my love. I am grown—full-stature. There will never be another—for me."

"You cannot read the future. You cannot know. No one can know. That is why marriage is—why it must be. We are not fit for freedom."

"Yes, yes. You—I—we read through conventionalized eyes—our thoughts are shackled—born shackled—the truth is crushed under—struggling to the light. We are better than we were. Marriage is an insult—it is no consecration; it is desecration."

"That is the catch-penny higher rot of the day—the weapon of men whose ruling passions are in anarchy against dominant reason."

"Reason—reason! What is reason? And what if it is so? Why analyze? Or, if you must analyze—God made it so. Why? Let me alone. I will be happy."

"How-happy?"

"I will make him happy."

"How—do you—know—that?"

"What?"

"That you will make him happy."

"Has he ever confessed his love for you?"

"No-no. But, I know."

"Has he ever looked love—such love—to you?"

"No; but---"

"Has he ever suggested anything beyond a friendship between you, deep as it is rare—but—anything more?"

"Oh, never."

"How, then, do you know?"

"I know by our perfect mating—by the silences we have lived through together; by the tone of his voice to me; by the glance of his eye—on me."

"Yet, you said-"

"I have but to speak one word, look one look, and his love will become conscious and turn to me—as mine to him."

"But you will never speak that word."

"Ah----"

"You will never look that look."

"—I am so cold, so cold! Am I dead?"

"No."

"Something died, then—something terrible and beautiful. What was it?"

"Nothing. You have ceased to struggle."

" Why?"

"Because—you are a good woman."

"I—good?"

"Yes."

"But I love a man—other than my husband. I shall always love him."

"Yes."

"And yet—I am—good?"

"You are human. You have instincts."

"But not bad?"

"You have principles. You will not be bad."

"What can I do?"

"No one must ever know."

"But I know."

"No one else."

"Never?"

"Never."

"Some day-"

"Never."

"I must go away—from him—from John Henshaw—from the man I love."

"You must not say that; you must not say 'John Henshaw, the man I love.'"

"Not even to myself?"

"Never to yourself."
"I could almost laugh. Oh-

"Hush!"

"I will go away; I am not strong enough."

"You will stay here. You will be

strong."

"Help me."

"I am helping you. I am crowning you. Hush!—you are strong—now."

"How still it is! Who are you?"

"I am—you."
"Help me."

"I am helping you."

"Stay with me."

"I am here."

"Keep me quiet."
"You are quiet."

"So quiet. How—quiet—it is—to be good! How—strangely—quiet! Is it death? How quiet is death! There is—a long death—to live."

"You are rocking your baby's

cradle. Forward and backward—forward and back."

In the evening, when the lights were low in the pretty club-house, Mrs. Heath came in alone.

"Oh, here she comes!" they cried. "We have been waiting for you. We missed you so at dinner. How is the

baby?"

"He is quite well, I think. We've just been having such a splendid romp together. What were you waiting for?"

"Mr. Henshaw has some new songs

we want you to try."

"Where is Mr. Henshaw—and where are his songs? Oh, good evening; I did not see you when I came in."

"You were too busy smiling at your husband. Will you play? Then come over to the piano. I'll turn for you. But, confidentially, what do those weird shadows mean about your eyes?"

"My eyes? You must be dreaming. Or—oh, these flickering lights! Aren't they unbecoming! Come, turn

the leaves for me."



CAPRICE

I MUST answer you now,
As you look so despairing.
But I'm puzzled just how
I must answer you now.
(If the cloud on your brow
Should be Cupid's sly daring!)
I must answer you now,
As you look so despairing.

Now you're ready to smile,
You must wait for your answer;
Love her fears may beguile,
Now you're ready to smile.
Lest a frown come the while,
Go, as quick as you can, sir!
Now you're ready to smile,
You must wait for your answer.

FRANK WALCOTT HUTT.



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LADY URSULA'S LOVERS

By Edgar Fawcett

I T was the first Sunday in June, and the church parade in the Park glowed with fair faces. Amid that portion of the crowd which had already wound its way past the laborious ugliness of the Achilles statue and was now leisurely strolling northward, a lady, who walked between two gentlemen, created much

passing remark.

Perhaps each of the gentlemen received also a good share of comment; for one was Mr. Pemberton Dalgrish, a prominent statesman, who had served as a cabinet minister during the last term of the Government now out of power, and the other was Lord Melville Barclay, second son of the Marquis of Billowbourne, richer, through inheritance, it was said, than even his brother, the heir, besides being a member of Parliament and one whose recent speeches in the House of Commons had seemed to prophesy brilliant political attainment.

The lady, exquisitely gowned, though with a peculiar consorting of richness and simplicity, bowed right and left to various friends as she moved onward between her two companions. But when she had reached a certain bench and had heard some one softly call her name, she paused, with an air of decision.

"Dear Aunt Anne," she said, "are you sure that this is altogether pru-

dent?"

The other gave a light, musical laugh. She was large, stout, blonde, with a delicious complexion that had survived her sixty years. Lines of age and suffering were visible below her eyes, but the eyes themselves held

blue sparkles of vitality between their golden lashes. As Anne Arbuthnot, she had once had scores of suitors, and still, as the widowed Mrs. Aylesbury, her influence and prestige were very great in the higher English world.

Beside her sat the dull and plain old Duchess of Down, disagreeable to almost everybody, but somehow the devoted admirer of Mrs. Aylesbury.

"It is always prudent, Ursula," Mrs. Aylesbury said, addressing her niece with the winsomeness of manner that had charmed thousands, "for a poor old rheumatic cripple like myself to try the medicine of sunshine. Besides, I'm well furred, as you see, and somewhere, in this happy multitude, lurks my grim but faithful Dobbs."

"But we don't see any Dobbs," Lord Melville said, with his odd, sober sort of buoyancy, pretending to make rapid survey of the open-air assemblage. "What would you do if she

betrayed you?"

"What would you do to-morrow if Big Ben should collapse while you were making one of your most glorious Westminster speeches? No; don't try to shake my faith in Dobbs. There isn't a soldier in the Park who would not fly from her matronly frown."

"Militarism is the fashion nowadays," said Pemberton Dalgrish. He spoke in the stolid monotone that almost invariably clad his phrases. He had a clean-shorn face, which at times looked as if it were cut from some stone of a grayish white, so severe was the accentuation of nose, lips, brow, and so marked its pallor. He stood over six feet, a towering figure, big-boned,

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loose-jointed, awkward, and yet somehow most keenly expressing the modern London Englishman of highest caste.

"Dobbs is above fashion," protested Mrs. Aylesbury; "'she holds no form of creed, but contemplates them all.' ''

"Nice talk," said Lord Melville, "for Sunday-morning church parade!"

"You drive me to it," cried Mrs. Aylesbury, "by daring to cast an aspersion on my Dobbs!"

"Then we'll stroll on and wait for you at luncheon, Aunt Anne?" said the younger lady, who had been addressed as Ursula.

"Yes, dear; and the duchess is coming too. So nice of her, isn't

it?"

"Very," smiled Mrs. Aylesbury's niece, who did not think the duchess could be nice under any conceivable circumstances; she endured her grace without visible boredom, only because of the real fondness felt and shown by that great lady for her cherished aunt.

"Lady Ursula," called out the duchess, in her grim, crackling way, "please have dry toast for me, will you not? I never touch bread in

any other form."

"I remember," was the genial

response.

And then Lady Ursula, when she had nodded across her shoulder and moved away with her two companions still on either side, said, amusedly:

"It is so droll! The duchess always demands her dry toast whenever she lunches or dines with us. But she never dreams of eating it. She devours pastry, salads—all kinds of unwholesome things—but the dry toast remains untouched."

"Perhaps she presents it as a peaceoffering to the god or goddess of

Dyspepsia," said Lord Melville. "Is there any doubt about the sex of Dyspepsia?" asked Lady Ursula. She spoke laughingly, but turned at the same moment to Dalgrish, perhaps fearing one of his long silences.

"They say it inflicts torments." returned Dalgrish, "and yet is apt to spring from trifling sources. Why not make it a feminine deity?"

"Are women the only triflers in the world?" she asked, as if his bitterness

"No; but they are quite the most agreeable."

"How can a torment be pleasant?" "How can a pleasure be torment-

ing?" he shot back, swiftly.

'You mean---?"

"That I am never happy save when I am near you, and I am always unhappy when not alone with you."

Their voices had been very low, and yet she turned, half-startled,

toward Lord Melville.

But he had not heard. He was watching a peculiarly obese woodpigeon, settled on the bough of a

sapling elm.

"Look!" he exclaimed; "for all the world it's just like the Duchess of Down, after banqueting with your aunt -corpulent, comfortable, sleepy, with every evidence of having gone in for juicy meats, rich salads, and everything that means the opposite of dry toast."

"Leave the poor wood-pigeon in peace," chided Lady Ursula. birds carry tales, why may they not feel the magnetism of slanders?"

"Oho!" laughed Lord Melville; "is her grace so darkly down in your bad books?"

"Not at all. I shall order her dry toast of the butler, with an alacrity born of affection, the instant I am at home."

"Affection!" repeated Lord Melville. "Come, now; you don't really

love the 'dismal duchess.'"

"She's very fond of Aunt Anne. I like her for that. I like her for liking my best friend on earth."

Here Dalgrish spoke. "You say that as if you had an enemy on

earth."

"I have," she answered.

"Who's your enemy?" asked Dalgrish.

"Who?" echoed Lord Melville. "We both thirst for his blood; don't we, Dalgrish?"

"You can't kill Fate," said Lady

Ursula, softly.

Across her beautiful, graceful head the eyes of her two lovers met. They both understood.

II

"Is she not lovely?" Mrs. Aylesbury was saying to the "dismal duchess," as her niece receded, escorted by the two men who, as all London knew, were struggling for her hand.

A gruff little mutter gave reply. But it was not dissent. With all her rank and wealth, Grace Harley, the daughter of a duke and now the widow of one, had lived a life that hardened her. One daughter had brought disgrace upon her, another had died in girlhood with frightful suddenness, and her only son had drowned. Some spirits etherealized by calamity; hers was coarsened. "I still have my appetite left," she would say; "a fiveshilling peach, when particularly highflavored, interests me; my three little Poms amuse me at times; I like a French novel, when it is thoroughly awful and yet written with amazing cleverness. There isn't a man living whom I can endure; all the nice ones are dead and buried; and there's just one woman on earth who doesn't bore me-Anne Avlesbury. silver's got into her hair, but it hasn't left her laugh, and she diffuses the same fascination to-day that I used to bask in when she was eighteen."

It was seldom that her grace condescended to discuss the looks, good or bad, of any fellow-creature. But she chose, just now, to exploit one of her blunt, curt criticisms.

"Ursula's hair is superb. I hate reddish hair except when it has those shiny streaks, and hers crinkles a little, besides. Her face reminds one of Romney's women—the tapering chin and those big, gold-black eyes; but Ursula's entirely a more perfect piece of natural contrivance. She's a little too thin for my taste—elle manque d'ampleur. But, then, flesh is out of fashion now. Do you remember your Tennyson? Somewhere he says of a girl that she was 'lightly, musically made.' That describes Ursula; she's 'musically made.'

Mrs. Aylesbury bowed slow yet hearty acquiescence. "But I wish her life, poor dear, had been thus far less touched by discords. Think of it, Grace; she is not yet five-and-twenty, yet what trouble she has been

through!"

The duchess only laughed. Anne! Been through, indeed! What have we been through, pray? At seven-and-thirty you lost your husband, one of the most brilliant statesmen in Europe. And both your children—sweet girls!—died just as they were budding into womanhood! And what have I been through, Anne? Ah, you know, you know! Look at our dukedom, that poor Bertie left! Where is it now? graced by that reprobate who is worn out with his vices at forty! Ursula, forsooth! Why, her bed's been one of roses, thus far. an earl's daughter, with five thousand a year, she married that Australian millionaire. Did she love him? Um probably not.''

"I suppose she thought she loved him when they married," said Mrs. Aylesbury, who never minded the duchess's brusque ways, always sure of the love and fidelity that lay be-"Jasper Garth had good yond them. manners, a certain definite polish. He settled that large sum on her. You know what girls are-all London was running after him. Nobody here had found out anything wrong in his family; they were simply obscure Australians, I believe, living somewhere on the outskirts of Melbourne, before Jasper began to make his first grand coup in the gold districts. I once fancied that he disliked to speak at all concerning his people, and suspected

there might have been some shady traffic connected with them. But one day Ursula herself explained it all. His parents were ordinary and plain bourgeois, who had given him an education—he wasn't in the least illiterate, you'll recall—and then had peaceably perished on their farm. He was an only child; there was no one to fight for his money after—hewent."

Mrs. Aylesbury lingered palpably over the last three words. The duchess at once caught her up.

"I see; you reflect Ursula's absurd

doubt.'

"Do I?" Mrs. Aylesbury half sighed. "Well, I live with her, you know. One can't do that, I suppose, and not

feel the contagion."

"Truly," grumbled the duchess, "it's gruesome to think how some people delight in borrowing trouble! Here's Ursula, one of the richest young widows in England, who allows herself to become the prey of hobgoblin fancies."

"She doesn't think them hobgoblin," said Mrs. Aylesbury, with an un-

wonted faintness of tone.

"Oh," snapped the duchess, "then you're under her spell? Shake it off, Anne; it's ridiculous. Didn't the courts give her all his money? Good heavens! if there had been a doubt of death would our English jurisprudence not have refused her the benefit of it?"

Mrs. Aylesbury caught her friend's hand. "Grace, you can't scold a sentiment into extinction. I was tempted to try that, once, but I failed.

And now——"

"Now you sympathize with her!"

"I pity her."

"You ought not to. She didn't care for him when he sailed back again to Australia. She was tired of him, repelled by him. He wasn't of her monde, and the fact came out to her in burning tints. You needn't attempt to deny this, Anne. I know I'm hated by many persons because I rigidly adhere to what they call my patrician creeds. Ursula and her husband were oil and water. Nothing

could have been more natural. woke to a sense of it. Fate, for once, was kind. He went back to his own country on a visit of financial necessity. The stanch vessel that bore him collided in a fog with some other craft. There was a ghastly accident—only one boatful of women and children, with a single sailor, to tell how complete had been the Carpentaria's wreck! The ship that almost split her in two was never heard from. That she was so injured herself as to sink soon after the blow she had inflicted, thousands, hundreds of thousands, feel confident at the present hour. The whole matter is now as clear as day. The times of Robinson Crusoe are ancient history, Anne. Marine trade has killed marine romance. sula's present attitude is thoroughly idiotic. There's a remote possibility that her husband is now on some isle of Oceanica, building nocturnal bon-But, then, there is just the fires there. same remote possibility that every house over yonder in Park Lane, from the Marble Arch to Hamilton Place, may suddenly and simultaneously collapse in ruins. The truth is, Anne, your beloved Ursula needs a course of waters. Why not get her to Carlsbad by the end of July? You really should. I'll give you a note to my Carlsbad doctor. If he takes her in hand, I don't doubt she'll come back with all her nightmare delusions ended on the subject of Mr. Enoch Robinson Jasper Arden Crusoe Garth!"

Mrs. Aylesbury was covertly biting her lips as the duchess paused. "No, Grace," she protested; "you're quite on the wrong path; Ursula's ailment isn't physical. And I don't think, dear, that you have put the case just—accurately. In the first place, Ursula held that long interview with the sailor, Reuben Creech."

"Oh, I'd forgotten that—one of the survivors."

"He told her that, in the awful panic which followed the manning of the boats, he had distinctly seen her husband, whom he chanced to know by sight, Jasper having previously been

pointed out to him as the great Australian millionaire. Already the deck of the Carpentaria was being swept by the heavy seas. Jasper's tall figure stood forth in the boldest relief. He was trying to comfort a little, terrified throng. He cried out to them: 'I feel in my soul that I shall be saved!' as if to rally their drooping courage. Then Reuben Creech, whom the captain had himself pushed into the boat with the wailing women and children, saw no more of the poor Carpentaria, for a huge wave shouldered him off from her and the fog folded its gray curtains around him and his pitiful charge. Poor Reuben! No wonder his hair was white as snow, though he had hardly passed thirty. The other sailor, who was to help him in the boat, was not there, you know, when looked While obeying, like Reuben, the captain's order, he had fallen into the Think of fifty hours passed in that hollowing and heightening ocean! You may remember that when they got out into sunshine and were, almost miraculously, picked up by a sailing vessel, two of the women were mad and one had died, with her baby at her breast. Reuben's whole recital had a fearful effect on Ursula. His description of her husband, standing so courageously among those terrorized fellow-voyagers, pierced her soul. She had always known him to be good and brave, and now it filled her with a sort of guilty consternation to recall that she had never loved him. They had had a kind of quarrel—their first real one—just before he sailed. Jasper's temper, sometimes hot with others, had always been the essence of evenness with Ursula. Beyond all question, she was the love of his life; in spirit he was always at her feet. I won't say that Ursula found herself loving him after she had lost him-

"But, my dear Anne," petulantly broke in the duchess, "that's just what

you are saying!"

"No, I'm not," persisted Mrs. Ayles-"What I do say is that Ursula envelops his memory with a delicate and sweet idealism. She is always

haunted by the feeling that he possessed traits and qualities which she foolishly, wantonly neglected. Now, add to this mental state the incessant reëchoing in her ears of those words which the sailor heard her husband speak, in that lurid hour, on the deck of that shattered and sinking ship. Not long ago she told me, very calmly for she is nearly always quite calm that the sentence spoken by Reuben Creech, just as he delivered it to her, will keep ringing in her brain for a whole day, from the end of sleep to the beginning of sleep, without the slightest cessation—'I feel in my soul that I shall be saved!' I don't think Carlsbad, or any bad, could silence that voice, unless it were some magic fontaine de jouvence. There's not a hint of pose, remember, about Ursula. Perhaps I shouldn't mention, even to you, these mysterious little details."

"Mysterious, Anne! I should say Come, now; soyons exactes. so! Does Ursula positively think that her husband may turn up at some future time? Does she, or does she not?"

Mrs. Aylesbury mused. At length: "She keeps hearing that voice."

"Anne!" cried the duchess, "you're insupportable!"

"You mean that Ursula is!"

"Pshaw! You humor the girl in this nonsense—it's self-evident.

"I feel sorry for her in more ways than this."

"What other ways, if you please?"

"Grace, I meant to inform you; but, really, you are so particularly snap-

pish this morning!"

"If I'm specially snappish, it's perhaps because I'm getting hungry. You told me you were going to have sole au vin blanc, and your chef does it miles beyond mine."

Mrs. Aylesbury made a movement as if to rise. But her companion at once laid a detaining hand on her

"No, no, Anne; not yet. You must tell me about those other reasons for thinking Ursula's fate a sad one."

III

"My dear Ursula is breathing just now," Mrs. Aylesbury continued, "what I can best describe as an electric atmosphere. Two men, each of whom, after his fashion, is amongst the cleverest in England, have laid steady siege to her heart. With that same heart I believe she likes Lord Melville Barclay the better of the two. He is handsomer, more vivacious, more sparkling, more human. Pemberton Dalgrish must by no means be counted out. Each wages war effectually, but Dalgrish employs, perhaps, the more skilful tactics. His fascination is almost purely intellectual, and yet the force of this passion so abounds with intensity that now and then Melville strikes me as hardly The entire situation is a his match. novel one."

"Novel?" sniffed the duchess. "Why, good heavens, Anne, are you getting a taste for hyperbole, with your increasing years? What can be more ordinary than the devotions received by a rich and well-born young widow from two rather exceptional men?"

"No, no," declared Mrs. Aylesbury; "you are quite wrong in all this; you take the conventional view, and it is not an affair which the conventional view fits, because each man is keenly aware that Ursula dreads to marry again; because each man is bent upon trying to dissipate in her mind the curious, adhesive loyalty to an idea. Each knows that she will never marry until that idea has become null-until she bids it a voluntary farewell, and ceases forever to harbor what they both rate as the most idle of super-Meanwhile, she does not dismiss them as her suitors, and, too, all the vividness, the captivation, the interest, the excitement of daily contact with both potent personalities exerts upon her its continual strain. This is why I have said that the atmosphere she breathes is electric. Now, come home with me to luncheon, and see for yourself—or, perhaps, you will see nothing."

Here Mrs. Aylesbury rose, with much difficulty. The vigilant Dobbs at once appeared from nowhere, and with like alacrity the duchess's footman, wearing her well-known livery of olive-green and yellow mountings, glided from discreet ambush.

The luncheon, with its perfection of fruits, viands and rare wines, was served almost immediately on the arrival of the two ladies. There would have been pathos in Mrs. Aylesbury's abstemiousness, while she partook only of one or two plain dishes cooked for herself alone, and yet sat surrounded by healthy appetites and fearless digestions, if her smiling lips and genial manners had not now, as always, made her the most winsome of invalids.

The talk was lively and careless. "Will you go to St. Moritz with your aunt in July, Ursula?" asked the duchess, when the edge of her hunger had been sufficiently blunted to permit of her speaking at all.

"As if I wouldn't go to one of the Poles with her, duchess!" replied Ursula, with a fond glance at Mrs. Aylesbury; "provided her tastes lay in that direction."

"But you might argue," said Lord Melville, "as to which of the Poles it ought to be."

"I shouldn't think it ought to be either," said Ursula, with a certain hard demureness, looking down at her plate; "that is, not for a person troubled with rheumatism."

"The South Pole sounds more Summery," threw off Dalgrish, his grave voice making the flippancy rather droll. Then he added: "But I quite agree with Melville—you'd have your views."

"I won't hear Ursula called a woman with views," rebuked Mrs. Aylesbury.

"All Englishmen are beginning to have them, I'm afraid," snarled the duchess. "It's the result of that awful American invasion."

"Don't hate the Americans, please, duchess," pleaded Lord Melville. "Their delightful daughters are the last hope of our bankrupt aristocracy."

"Does that mean," frowned her grace, "that you've an eye on some Oregonian heiress, pretty as a peacock, and with just as ugly a voice?"

"I'll think it over after you've quite ruined me at bridge," was the meek

answer.

"Impudent boy! I've never played

with you but three times."

"Make it four, duchess. I'm sure you will, if you only recall my leaving Lady Bedevere's house at two, the other morning, minus ninety-seven pounds."

"Bless me!" said the duchess, popping on her glasses, without which she liked to make folk believe she could see no further than the food she put on her plate, "I thought it was Mr. Dalgrish.

"Do we look alike?" asked the

latter, sedately.

"I've heard that you sometimes feel alike," said the duchess, in her

throat, pointedly.

The two men looked at each other. Not a muscle of Dalgrish's face moved, for a moment. Lord Melville, on the other hand, gave a light laugh. Then their two pairs of eyes sought Lady Ursula.

"They quarreled again last week in the House of Commons, I'm told,"

Lady Ursula said.

"It must have been ever so dramatic," said Mrs. Aylesbury. an hour or so later, these two implacable foes were peacefully dining together on the terrace. Somebody passed them and listened to their conversation. It was about the Gold Cup Day at Ascot and their mutual surprise at Bellerophon's victory."

Perhaps Mrs. Aylesbury exaggerated a little, or had heard certain romanticized reports. Nevertheless, Lord Melville and Pemberton Dalgrish would now and then dine together, and sometimes visit each other's chambers, which were not far apart, in the St. James's region.

One such visit happened a few days after the luncheon in Upper Grosvenor street. The rooms, this time, were Dalgrish's, charmingly furnished, one giving into the other, through heavy purple tapestries. The first room was wainscoted on three sides with low book-cases. Except for the ceiling, a vague mauve,

every tint in it was purple.

As the two men entered this first room a little after midnight, glimpse of the adjacent apartment was also moderately clear. Between the half-drawn purple tapestries you saw Dalgrish's immense desk, littered with innumerable papers. Lord ville knew that the walls were gray and covered with many choice and beautiful prints. But he also knew that the rest of the room had not a note of elegance or distinction. It represented one-half of its owner, just as this empurpled coign of taste, simplicity and superfine beauty represented the other half.

He appropriated an arm-chair that seemed to be awaiting him, beside an ebony table on which were a siphon, a decanter, some glasses and an open box of cigarettes. Into a second arm-chair Dalgrish presently They both lighted cigarettes and smoked in silence. Also in silence, Lord Melville made himself something "fizzy" to drink. Again, and still in silence, Dalgrish imitated

his guest.

The relations between these men were certainly remarkable. That evening Lord Melville had spoken in the House of Commons witheringly against tenets which he knew that his friend cherished. He had made no personal reference to Dalgrish, nor had Dalgrish, in his reply, gone beyond generalities of rebuttal and defiance. Both had the ear of the House, and their gifts of debate were equally admired there. Lord Melville was the richer man; but in birth, and the prestige which England accords to it, they ran an even race. Each was accredited strictly honorable. Party prejudice, on this point, conceded all its arrows to be blunted. Some observers liked to declare, however, that their intimacy was founded on a hypocritic basis. This, however, did not necessarily concern their integrity. All was fair in love and war, granted their most ironical critics. They were both trying to marry one of the most alluring women in the land, and if they chose to watch each other like panthers preparing to swoop on the same object of prey, that was quite a matter of tact pitted against tact, and skill against skill.

The simile of the two panthers cannot be called inept. The pair knew the same people, lived very much the same lives. In almost any other country than England, they would have been open foes. As it was, there was perfect truth in the statement that they did not hate each other. Lord Melville cordially admired his rival's mental abilities, and almost passionately, though with covert stress, exalted him as a wooer of boundless cun-Dalgrish, on his own side, thought Lord Melville one of the handsomest men he had ever seen, respected the virility and audacity of his intellect, and regarded the force of his fascination with women as a boon which the gods had made dazzlingly potent.

Each feared, therefore, with an incessant, smoldering affright, the other's success as a suitor. There were two subjects on which they hardly ever touched; one was Lady Ursula herself, and one was politics. All their animosity, all their accusations, recriminations and reprisals, they appeared coolly to leave behind them at St. Stephen's, when Parliamentary moments came to an end. This evening they had met at a great ball in Devonshire House, where all patrician London was prepared to welcome them, and they had left only because of a certain lady's relatively early departure.

Each of these men was eager to banish from the mind of Lady Ursula a certain tormenting phantom of suspicion. Yet all argument, as to the supreme probability that her husband was now dead, had thus far failed with her. Of course, she had duly recognized the weight of testimony. The courts of England, for instance, had concluded to treat the matter of Jasper Garth's death as a fact incontestably secure. This, in itself, had a world of solid significance. So had the account given by Reuben Creech. Indeed, Lady Ursula would sometimes merely sigh to one or the other of her adorers, and affirm that her posture of indecision was born of imagination, fancy, even morbid nervousness. "Call the prejudice whatever you please," she would add, "it is none the less unconquerable."

Both the lovers secretly admitted a deadlock in their future overtures. And yet for both it was a time of stealthy waiting, of drastic suspense. "Is he keeping faith with me?" Lord Melville would ask himself, in furtive anxiety. "May there not be some plan in his brain, at the present moment, for pushing her into a state of concession and surrender?"

The same question, however differently framed, would be put by Dalgrish to his own thoughts. And so months had gone on. Each mistrusted the other with a kind of veiled savagery, yet neither believed that the other would, or could, have recourse to any actual treachery.

The silence which had now fallen upon them Lord Melville suddenly broke. "I was thinking," he said, "that these two apartments resemble you. Here's your esthetic side—heaven help the word, though, 'soiled, of late years, by all ignoble use!' Yonder"—and he pointed through the aperture in the voluminous curtains—"you are revealed as the worker. You're a hard worker, too; I see that."

The last three words were understood clearly by Dalgrish, and he valued not a little the compliment they conveyed. It was precisely as if his companion had praised his speech of a few hours ago, which had teemed with statistics lucidly presented.

with statistics lucidly presented.
"I don't suppose I work a whit harder than you do, Barclay," he replied.

Lord Melville screened a yawn. "God knows I do my poor best. These infernal London seasons take

Don't you it out of one, though. find it that way?"

"I find that life takes it out of one." Lord Melville raised his glass. with some men."

"With men like you and me," said Dalgrish.

"You're not—er—sensitive, eh?"

"I've learned how to seem other-

"You've learned very successfully." Dalgrish laughed, faintly. "Come, now; you don't wear your heart on your sleeve for daws to peck at."

"Bless me," smiled Lord Melville, "I thought I passed for the essence

of candor and impetuosity."

"Between what we seem and what we are quite often stretch abysmal deeps." Dalgrish gave this out in lazy monotone. "Am I not right?" he ended, making a big smoke-cloud.

"No doubt." Lord Melville flashed a glance across the table at his host's keen, beardless profile. It had for him, just then, a Dantesque grimness. "But if you say this of men, what shall be said of women?"

"Oh, they're sometimes more than abysmal; they're fathomless."

"Which means—problematic."

"Call it that. One marvels, at times, what it is, after all, that makes them worth solving."

"And how few solutions man ever

reaches!'

"You mean," said Lord Melville, "because they keep guard on themselves with such astuteness?"

There's no finding out some things from them, unless they choose to tell you. And then how often do

they tell you the truth?"

The eyes of the two speakers here slowly met. It was almost as if Dalgrish had established between their separate selves a sudden magnetic current. Lord Melville had the sensation of clutching some sort of electric knob.

On the chess-board of their apathy, Dalgrish had made an abrupt move. No reference to Lady Ursula had been ventured, and yet the air now tingled with her name.

"To what kind of truth do you allude?" Lord Melville asked. spell seemed to be enwrapping him; he even tried to struggle against the influence, and failed. Dalgrish's powerful personality was at work upon him—or so he almost luridly fancied.

"The truth," said Dalgrish, "that a man desires when he is in love."

"Ah," breathed his hearer. Then he rapidly swept on: "But so many women don't know their own hearts.

"And so many have no hearts to

know!"

"Conceding the wisdom below your cynicism, Dalgrish, may I ask——?"

The other rose. He went to one of the book-cases just opposite his visitor and leaned against it, facing him. On the clean-drawn features gleamed an undue pallor. His bad figure was graceless as usual, but his head, slightly thrown back, held that poise of challenge and defiance which his observer had more than once witnessed under the Gothic groining of the House.

"You may ask me anything you like," he said. "Suppose we have it out with each other, sensibly and definitely, now, even if forever after

we hold our peace."

Lord Melville, palpitating with inward emotions, which only the mellow and lambent blue of his eyes disclosed, raised himself bolt upright in his chair, and answered, gravely:

"Very well; let us have it out with

each other, as you propose."

IV

DALGRISH left the book-case and returned to his seat beside the table.

"We are both in love with the same We are both intensely dewoman. sirous of marrying her."

Thrilled with amazement, Lord Melville nodded and murmured, "Yes."

"Each of us has paid court for a long time. No distinct result arrives. There is, of course, her reluctance to marry."

"I agree to that."

"But the reluctance is founded on a dream, a bit of feminine nervousness, a flimsy and idle speculation. It is, in short, wholly ridiculous."

"Granted."

"There seems no reason why it should not be dissolved, dissipated completely, by the influx of an honest Ten, twenty men have passion. doubtless craved this result, for she is one of those women who wring male hearts as guiltlessly as she might bruise grass with her footsteps. Such women are rare, and when they dawn upon us they hold among their sisters the same place as roses hold among We say of this flower or that, 'I like it more,' 'I like it less'; but of the rose we say nothing, and mean everything."

"You paint a portrait in words; you're a verbal Sir Joshua. I can't say more," interrupted Lord Melville.

"I want you to say more, and in quite a different strain, presently," replied Dalgrish. "I hope it will also be in an acquiescent strain."

"Acquiescent? How?"

"In this way, Barclay." With both arms laid along the table-edge, and with eyes burning into his companion's face like two steady-flamed tapers, Dalgrish went on:

"All the others have gone; we alone are left. This sort of triangular thing might continue for an age yet. Suppose I make you an offer to compromise. It sounds odd, doesn't it?"

Lord Melville nodded. He had gained, by this time, as much real self-control as the semblance of it heretofore assumed.

"Very odd, indeed, Dalgrish. What sort of an offer to compromise?"

"Going away."

"Going—away? I don't understand."

"For three months—we two, in each other's company, slipping away, if you please. Parliament, as you know, closes next Wednesday."

".Yes."

"We disappear a day or two afterward. She has no news of us. We bid her good-bye, and sail."

"Sail? Where, pray?"

"For Norway, on Reginald Cleeve's yacht. He told me yesterday it was mine till Autumn. The doctors, you've probably heard, order him to Marienbad. He's horribly used up; all his plans for a great northern cruise have fallen through. Is my proposal too sudden for you to accept it immediately? Would you prefer to think it over—to sleep on it?"

Lord Melville had grown pale.

"But its meaning, Dalgrish?"

The other gave a slight shrug. "Oh, its meaning is absence. To her this absence may evoke discovery. I'm not too cryptic, I hope."

"You're not cryptic at all," Lord Melville launched forth, full of resolute emphasis. "You're plain as day. The discovery, you think, may prove for her a clear perception as to which

of us she really loves——?"

"Yes."

"And when we return, after having looked upon the maelstrom and the midnight sun, and all that—after having refreshed our intelligences, jaded by service to the British Empire—we may make a totally unforeseen discovery. We may find our enchantress engaged to marry Smith, Brown, or Jones!" Lord Melville rose, flinging his cigarette into the half-consumed liquid of his tumbler. "No, thanks, Dalgrish. I don't care for that kind of compromise. With all courtesy, I must refuse to accept it."

The other, for a short time, remained seated. "I felt you'd refuse at first," he said, with eyes on the floor. But, while he was quitting his chair, Lord Melville's voice rang firmly:

"At first! Always, rather! I mean to play a stubborn game, and to play it out in my own way." His genial eyes hardened; a tensity seemed to touch the rims of his lips. "I think, also, that I may win at the end, provided——"

"Provided?"

With hands thrust into his pockets, Lord Melville veered around on one heel. Then, as he roamed the room, with lowered head: "Oh, I don't wish to imply for an instant that the game will not be played fairly—fairly on both sides."

"You may rest sure it will be so played on one side," declared Dal-

grish.

After this, they remained apparent friends, though really on much colder terms than before. Dalgrish never forgave a snub, and he had the most bleeding sense that Lord Melville had dealt him a round one; not because the latter had rebuffed him—he had not expected anything like quick compliance—but because his overtures had received such prompt check. He felt as though his rival had sneered at him for cowardice, instead of greeting respectfully his signs of temporary truce. He was burningly indignant, that night, after Lord Melville departed. But anger soon blent itself with the jealousy that had long lain semi-somnolent in his life. The fire was fed with a new fuel, and increased accordingly.

He had meant strictest justice. Anything, it had come to seem, would be better than this perpetual uncertainty. To-day, for example, Lady Ursula would drive with him in the Park. She would look angelic in some profusely becoming hat or frock. She would beam with benignance not coquetry, for there was not a shadow of it in her temperament. would tell her, for the fiftieth time, that she was the one woman on earth to him, and, for the fiftieth time, she would answer his entreaties with certain phrases full of pitying sweetness, that conveyed no tangible response at And with Melville Barclay he was confident it would be quite the same. Next day he would have his golden hour, his fervid questionings, his drear disappointments. And so it would go on and on. What better for all three of them than some sting of change, like this purposed separation? Each was in a rut of usage, habit; each might be wholesomely dislocated. dual absence might appeal to her like nothing else. And his own and Barclay's ability to bear it might be tested as proof of what power her innocent sorcery had exerted and could still exert.

But no; Lord Melville had insolently flung aside the proposal, on the very threshold of its presentation. He preferred a continuance of war. But that definition did not cover his negative pose. There was something else. He had implied distrust. Dalgrish, who had never done an underhand thing in his life, now felt himself wondering whether he might not, if temptation rose, break the bonds of his past moral strictness. But, of course. there was no escalier dérobé into Lady Ursula's favor. She would go on, hugging her superstition about the possibility of her husband not being dead, and to try to budge it would be like setting one's shoulder against a mountain.

V

LORD MELVILLE, on his own side, had with irony compared himself to a wary fly, which declines the cobweb hospitalities of a specially guileful

spider.

"Not that I think Pemby Dalgrish," he reflected, "a trickster or dissembler. Far from that! There isn't a political foe in whom I repose more solid faith. But love isn't politics, and there's no man living to whom I'd yield an inch in a fight like ours. It's marvelous that we've hung together amicably so long a time. Perhaps, his whole attempted plan is based on a belief that she cares more for him than me. Well, now and then I think she does; but now and then I think she doesn't. Still, in any case, I keep my own counsel, steer my own boat. Her wild fancy about Jasper Garth is like a veil that maddeningly shrouds But if I've no strength, myself, to rend the veil, I'll not trust to another's energies. Wooing is like dying; you've got to do it alone, for the reason that no other process has yet been discovered. If I wish to learn how well or ill my lady bears my absence on the perilous main," pursued Lord Melville, thinking very much as he was wont sometimes to talk, "I'll not go halves in my seafaring with the man who wishes to marry her quite as much as I do!"

They both had the good taste to keep silent before Lady Ursula. She now saw them oftener than usual, for the season was one of especial gaiety. Whither she went one of them always followed, and oftener the two.

One afternoon Ursula came in from a very fashionable charity bazaar, held on this occasion at the Botanical Gardens. She was dressed entirely in white, frilled and furbelowed with such bounty and symmetry that her slender form, crowned with the ruddy-tinted waves of her lovely hair, seemed like a flower more wondrous than any of those which she was describing as the environment of this Regent's Park festivity.

"I suppose they were there," at

length hazarded her aunt.

"They, Aunt Anne?"

"Don't pretend not to understand, Ursula, dear."

The younger woman broke into a laugh. "As if I could pretend anything with you!"

Mrs. Aylesbury never rebuked or scolded. But now she felt constrained

to be very direct.

"Ursula, you must like one of them better—a little better, at least. You can't care for both equally. But you've allowed them to send all other serious suitors away. It is so widely expected of you that you'll soon make a choice! Come, dear, whether you do make a choice or not, tell me which of them you prefer."

"But you mean as my husband, Aunt Anne; and I don't think of either in that way! You know my

reasons, surely."

Mrs. Aylesbury repressed a sigh. "Yes; I know your reasons, my child. But, if these did not exist, if you were willing to marry again,

which of these two men would you choose?"

Ursula sat silent, looking down at her hands in their long white gloves, where they rested among the feathery white puffings of her gown.

"Will you not answer, then? Remember, I've never put to you this

question so pointedly before."

Ursula's eyes had drooped, but she lifted them now, darkly splendid, with golden stars in their dusk.

"I've thought it all over. very often," she hesitantly began. "There are times when talking to Dalgrish and realizing that he cares for me are sources of great delight. He is not merely clever; he has a rich, profound mind; its workings affect me with a feeling of valued privilege; I seem to have crossed, in his more confidential moments, a kind of guarded threshold, and to see beyond it the workings of some large but exquisite piece of mechanism; the flash and whizz of intricate cogwheels both perplex and please meand it is all so smooth of motion, so exact, so harmonious—so admirably oiled against minor and petty resistances!

Mrs. Aylesbury smiled, but at the same instant gave a meaning little nod. "Very pretty as rhetoric, my dear; but we women don't love with our intellects. Now, tell me of Melville Barclay. I see you're coloring. Is that a confession?"

"Melville," murmured her niece, "is a most amiable, companionable man. He's by no means lacking in brains, but he's often more picturesque than thoughtful. He inherited prejudices, bigotries, if you will. So did Pemberton Dalgrish. And yet one has shaken them off, while the other—"

"Good heavens! I didn't ask you, Ursula, for a treatise on his mental capacity! This comes, I suppose, of your going into British politics, with two celebrated young statesmen mad to marry you. I've just found out that you don't love Dalgrish except with your head. Now, frankly, do you love Melville with your heart?"

Lady Ursula rose at this, went up to her aunt and kissed her on each cheek. "Our emotions are curious contrivances. We are told that the heart is muscle. One shouldn't deny anatomical truths; but, for my part, I should rather have suspected it of being wax."

"Wax is impressionable."

"Yes; but malleable, plastic. And then forgetfulness, ennui, can so easily turn its surface into a tabula rasa. You spoke of my having colored just now; the flush was only a guilty one."

"Guilty, Ursula! You mean that you're ashamed of not caring more

than you do for either man?"

"Precisely that." And Ursula's face, weebegone one minute, was wreathed in smiles the next.

Mrs. Aylesbury gave an admonishing gesture, with pain in her gentle eyes. "But is this fair?" she exclaimed. "Is it not unworthy of you? Ought you not to dismiss them both?"

"Dismiss them? As if I could!"

"You can't, then?"

"They wouldn't go. They would say that they were going, but they would stay on. Oh, I know them!"

"But you've let them clear the field of everybody else!" Mrs. Aylesbury

laughed

"Everybody else,' as you phrase it, cleared the field of their own accord. These two are a survival—"

"Of the fittest?"

"Or the fondest, whichever you will."

"Oh, Ursula, you're incorrigible! I've an appointment with Heath Hammond to-morrow morning, and I've half a mind to beg his intercession."

"Dear old Heath Hammond!" said Ursula. "We've talked it over several times."

Her aunt gave a dismayed scream. Through her mind floated a vision of one of the staidest and most hardheaded men in England, and one of its most capable lawyers as well, listening to a monologue of Ursula's which must have struck him as the essence of childish frivolity.

He had consented to assume a trus-

teeship of Mrs. Aylesbury's property, and later, after the inheritance of Jasper Garth's riches, he became to Ursula an invaluable counselor. But these two ladies represented a family which his father, the famous Dudley Hammond, had legally served and advised in former years. Heath rarely took new clients; he had more now than most men of his profession could safely have harbored.

No one doubted his great abilities, and yet it was strange how every one, if asked concerning his social equipments, would have pronounced him dull. But it was, nevertheless, an alleged dullness, quite disconnected with unpopularity. The most exclusive London houses were not merely open to him; he was very frequently invited to pass beyond their lintels, to break

bread with their occupants.

The Duchess of Down, on a fair part of whose possessions he kept the wariest protective eye, had rather recently said of him, in her staccato manner: "We call Heath Hammond an 'old' fellow; he isn't fifty yet. We call him dull; he's comfortable, soothing, selfeffacing, never flirts, has immense powers of sympathetic listening, and in some perfectly unexplainable way makes us all believe that we are clever, when we are at our most stupid ebb. We call him one of the ugliest men in London, but, when we attempt to analyze his features, we find each of them strong and good. He was born old, of course; but he was also born wise and good-tempered. He never fascinates women, but he never wearies We accept him far too much them. as a matter of course. That is because he is so modest. Somehow one can't conceive of him as having married, and yet I dare say he would have made a model husband—he is a man of such magnificent silences. What could any sane woman desire?"

A few days later, Lady Ursula paid him one of the morning visits that her business relations with his firm rendered now and then compulsory. His private apartment, opening from a series of offices in a side-street off the Strand, was so plain that you were apt to forget its solid elegance. Through one broad bow-window the Thames was always visible. After she had signed one or two papers and listened to certain explanations regarding proposed investments, the young widow went to this window and stared out on the sunny, crinkling river. Suddenly she swept around, and said, with a touch of self-reproach:

"Oh, I'm taking up your valuable

time. I must go, must I not?"

Seated beside his huge, documentstrewn desk, Heath Hammond glanced up at the clock which hung directly above it.

"I've twenty minutes yet," he said. "What else can I do for you? Would you like that envelope opened?"

VI

At these calm words, Ursula uttered a little, impatient cry. "How many times shall I have to tell you that I don't care a button about the envelope? Dear Mr. Hammond, I know but too well what it contains—an entreaty that I shall not marry again. That was the incessant trouble with Jasper; he had a feeling that, if anything happened to him, I might marry again. I'm glad Aunt Anne doesn't know that he left the sealed package in connection with the will. Then she, too, would have bothered me about opening it."

"I don't wish to bother you, Lady Ursula," said the lawyer. "But on it is written, 'To be opened by my wife after I am dead'; and there seems a kind of irreverence in keeping it

sealed so long."

She tapped one hand with her sheathed fan. "I'm not irreverent," she said.

"It may contain something im-

portant."

"I've told you," she threw back, with a most unusual petulance, "that I know quite well just what it contains. My life with Jasper wasn't happy—I've told you that, also. But in so many of our discordant hours he would

keep up that one harsh strain—about my taking another husband in the event of his death! Now, please don't again refer——"

But the rest of the sentence died on her lips. He was looking at her with such gravity and yet such keenness that she felt as if some sudden force had deprived her of speech.

Watching him, she saw complete incredulity in his placid eyes. "It will not do, Lady Ursula," he presently said. "You must excuse me, but this is not your true reason."

She tried to look indignant, and forlornly failed. "Well?" she faltered, standing beside his chair, pierced with a sudden shame at her falsehood.

"Your real reason," continued Heath Hammond, "is your extraordinary belief that Mr. Garth still lives."

He rose and slowly followed her, as she again swerved toward the window. Gazing once more at the scintillant river, she said, brokenly:

"It isn't a belief; it's—it's a feel-

ing."

"Your husband is unquestionably dead. There is not one chance in a million that he survived."

She turned almost fiercely, facing

him. "No one saw him die."

Hammond shook his head. "The evidence was plain that the Carpentaria had only time to man one boat. The ship went down with terrible speed. Everybody in the small boat saw it go down, and the evidence of everybody was thoroughly examined by the most competent jurists."

Ursula scanned the rough, tranquil, honest face at her side. Then her eyes dropped, and she muttered, with a

certain dull stubbornness:

"Oh, well, open the envelope yourself, if that's your wish. I give you full permission."

Heath Hammond went back to his desk and stood there, for a moment, softly fumbling with some of the looser papers that overspread it. Soon he spoke quietly over one shoulder:

"Will you give me such permission

in writing?"

"Yes," she answered; and, drawing

off one glove, she hurried toward the desk, seating herself in the lawyer's chair. She then wrote three or four sentences quickly at his dictation, and signed them. "There," she announced, quitting the chair again, with a relieved backward fling of the head; "now you can open it whenever you please."

"This is encouraging," he said, with the flicker of a smile on his shortbearded lips. "The next thing to opening it yourself was to let some one else do so. Before long, I trust, we shall have the last fragment of a cobweb swept out of your brain."

She threw both hands into the air, with a prettiness of gesture that did not prevent it from being a sadness.

"Well, and when the highly healthful change does come—when the bee is out of my bonnet, and all that you and Aunt Anne and the old duchess and plenty of other people will expect me to 'make a selection.' This is what I really came here to say. Aunt Anne, who never scolds me, has come nearer to it, lately, than ever before. She thinks that I should dismiss Melville Barclay, dismiss Pemberton Dalgrish. She considers it wrong of me to let them continue their devotions. Perhaps she is right; but would it not be positively wicked if I married one of them, not loving him?"

Heath Hammond cleared his throat. "But—can that be possible?" he asked, lingeringly, in his most solemn tone, as though he were interrogating a witness.

"Oh, now you're going to argue me into a conviction that I'm truly fond of one of them!" She looked like the comedy of resignation, as she drew herself up and crossed her hands on her breast. "Which one have I wrongly persuaded myself that I don't love well enough to bear his name? Which am I entirely mistaken in fancying that I don't adore? Kindly inform me at once, and settle my suspense."

"Oh, this is a lawyer's office," returned her listener, with all his good-

nature manifest; "not a fortuneteller's or clairvoyant's."

Even while she talked with him, now satiric and whimsical, now earnest and anxious, now varying quite visibly between smiles and tears, now calling herself a weather-vane and anon blaming others that they should denounce her instability—at this same time, as it chanced, Lord Melville Barclay found himself face to face with an adventure.

He had always disliked Tottenham Court Road, holding it, like most Englishmen of his class, a thoroughfare combining much thrift with more vulgarity. For the coarseness of poverty he had sincere compassion; for the crudeness of shop-keeping prosperity he cherished not a little contempt. Driven in a cab through this noisy and flaring quarter, he asked himself if Goodge street, one of its tributaries, might not be less common in one sense and far more pathetic in another. He had ordered his driver to land him at a certain house there, and when he reached his destination the prevailing shabbiness pierced him with pity more acute because of a searching Summer sun.

Asking for Miss Throop, he was shown into a room on the first floor, which looked, with its daubs of oil paintings and its stuffed birds in glass cases, and its huge, impudent, gilded clock, as if it were waiting for a new Dickens to poke fun at all its glaring sins against taste.

Miss Throop did not keep him waiting long. She timidly entered, a thin creature in a dingy cotton gown, with sunken cheeks, prominent ears and beautiful, soft, gray eyes.

"Lord Barclay, I believe," she said, curtseying.

"Not Lord Barclay; I've no such dignity. Lord Melville Barclay, if you please, and nothing grander."

Miss Throop smiled, embarrassedly. "Excuse me, my lord; but we homespun folk don't weigh the differences between you gentry of title. Yes, Lord Melville; I remember. Won't you be seated, my lord?" And she

pointed to a haircloth chair with a

palpably fractured back.

No, Miss Throop," replied her visitor, with firmness but no trace of ill-temper; "I must tell you that I prefer to stand. You sent me, a day or two since, the strangest sort of You requested me to call here, and stated that you had very important news to give me that might prove of great value to me, since it concerned the future of Lady Ursula Garth. Now, I must not lose time in assuring you, Miss Throop, that you had no right whatever to indulge in any such form of double reference. And I must furthermore ask you to explain at once why you did so.

The big gray eyes gave out an aggressive flash. "I was one of the survivors of the Carpentaria, my lord.

I put that in my note."

"You made brief mention of it. I promptly recalled your name. I knew the names of all the survivors—" Here Lord Melville stopped short, and took a step in Miss Throop's direction. At the same time he pushed toward her another chair. "But you must sit," he said, with a new note of kindliness in his voice; "you don't look very well."

"I ain't, my lord," whined his hostess. But she raised, at the same time, a protesting hand, and he recognized but too clearly the deferential spirit of the English lower middle classes.

"Oh, all right," he said, and took the chair she had offered him. Then Miss Throop sank, half-cringingly, into that which he had offered her.

She rested her spare arms on the round dining-table that now made a slight arc between them, and leaned toward him.

"My lord," she presently wavered, as though obsessed by some burden of tidings too heavy and ample for anything save loitering delivery, "I—I asked you to come because I've had it on my mind and wanted to get it off."

Lord Melville knew men well. He did not know women as thoroughly, but

he knew them. A peculiar thrill passed through him now; he always remembered it, for he afterward had copious cause to make it the first milestone in the stretch of a certain mental and moral roadway.

"Had what on your mind?" he rather brusquely asked; "and what

have you wished to get off it?"

"This," answered Miss Throop, devouring his face almost melodramatically with the shining, wide-lidded eyes. "I—I saw Mr. Jasper Garth Yes, I saw him from the boat. die. He was standing very near the broken part of the deck, where the other ship had ploughed a great gap. was talking with some one, and stepped back. He fell straight into the water. Mercy! I can see it now!" lifted both bony arms, and waved "Nobody helped him; nothem. body seemed to notice—there was such wild confusion, you know, on the Carpentaria. The sea swung us away, but still I saw him from the small boat. I was going to say, 'Look, look! there's the great Australian millionaire drownding!' But I —I must have been scared dumb. He rose once, and a wave struck him. I thought he wouldn't come up again. The fog, you know, was bad, awful bad; but somehow there was a space round the spot where he'd sunk. And then I saw him come up again. He stretched one hand out of the water. I think everybody else must have been looking at the big ship, for she was going down quite fast. But I strained my eyes to catch another glimpse of him. And I did. He'd risen for the third time, just as they say drownding people always do. But it was only a mere flash of a white face. It disappeared, and just as a kind of horrible good-bye feeling for the poor lost gentleman began a-tugging at my heart, all of a sudden the fog turned thick as tar."

"H'm!" said Lord Melville, after the silence had grown a little. "And that was the end, I suppose?"

"His end, my lord? Oh, yes! I thought every minute ours would

come. We seemed to fall down a great hole in the sea, and the yells from the ship got fainter. Then the hole would swell up into a mountain, and we tottered on top of it, waiting to fall off. You know how long that lasted, my lord. I didn't mean to speak about anything except the—the certainty that Mr. Jasper Garth is dead."

"And you've told me," thought Lord Melville, "a very prettily concocted lie. And why the devil you've done it," his reflections proceeded, "I'm quite at a loss to conjecture."

Aloud he returned, quite off-handedly: "I say, Miss Throop, what motive had you for concealing this fact so long?"

VII

The woman fingered at a button on the front of her untidy gown. "Motive, my lord?" she tossed back, though not disrespectfully. "La! I got frightened—and no wonder, with all those questions the lawyers kept putting. And they had such coldblooded ways with 'em. I was afraid they'd laugh me down if I let out all I'd seen."

"Laugh you down? Why should

they?"

He was curt with her, and could scarcely veil his disgust. She perceived something of this, and her demeanor grew insecure. She bit her lips and scanned her prominent knuckles. She forgot to answer his question, or perhaps feared to do so. Her fine eyes no longer sought his face; their gaze wandered; they seemed to have become like weapons that have lost efficacy and hence are held in listless clasp.

"You're a poor dissembler, Miss Throop," her guest presently averred. "I do not believe a word of your story, and I am sure that you have been urged to fabricate it by some foolish adviser." His eyes for a moment swept the room, taking in its various repellent details. Then they returned to her disarrayed face,

and remained there fixedly. "Now, tell me—I insist that you tell me—how you came to communicate these fresh tidings, whether true or false, to me as your chosen hearer."

"You—frighten—me, my lord," she stammered, turning pale. "I—

didn't expect——"

"That I would see through your humbug so speedily?" She became tremulous, at this, and burst into tears. He watched her with steadiness for a little while, and found himself sincerely pitying her. His next words were much softer, and by degrees he won from her the real truth.

She had been ill, and had a younger sister in the Middlesex Hospital near by. She had lost her place as saleswoman with a Tottenham Court Road linen-draper, and her savings had begun to ebb at a rate that terrified. Eliza Todd, formerly Lady Ursula's maid, had counseled her to send the letter and trump up the sensational story. She had acted, of course, from a desperate hope of securing money. Eliza had assured her that Lady Ursula was kept from marrying one of two gentlemen, each of whom was longing to become her husband, through fear that Mr. Garth might still be alive. One of these was "a lord," and very rich. Eliza had thought it most probable that he stood higher in the favor of her late mistress; and so Miss Throop had begun her deceptive plans.

Lord Melville rose and walked to the door, after this rather ridiculous

confession terminated.

"You've been a very foolish person, Miss Throop," he said. Then a generous impulse seized him, born of thorough belief in the woman's poverty-stricken state. She was now struggling pathetically with her sobs and tears, and looked wan and faint as she stretched out imploring hands.

"Oh, please, my lord, have mercy on me! Don't have me arrested! I—"

She could speak no further.

"Have you arrested!" exclaimed Lord Melville, returning to her side and laying a hand momentarily on her frail, shaking shoulder. "Don't dream of such a thing! You've been woefully silly, but I don't doubt that Eliza Todd is more to blame than you. Here!" He tossed a sovereign on the table. "If you'd gone to Lady Ursula simply as one of the survivors in that horrible shipwreck, she might have aided you very substantially. But this wicked dalliance with Eliza Todd is quite a different affair. I recollect her perfectly. She was discharged because of laziness, fits of intemperance and suspected dishonesty."

He went back again to the door, while hearing Miss Throop's grateful cry as she clutched the sovereign. He was about to open the door and pass quietly out of the house when something detained him. He did not quite realize, at first, that this something

was a temptation.

His hand had grasped the doorknob, but now it dropped limply away. Once more he retraced his steps. Miss Throop turned her tearful face toward him. He saw her fingers tighten about the coin, as though she dreaded he might reclaim it.

"Thank you, my lord," she piped, uneasily; "thank you very much, and I hope it's a sign of your forgiveness."

He was looking at her with great attention, while he twirled between thumb and finger an end of his blond mustache.

"You told your story quite badly," he said, with a sort of musing, self-centred air.

She started, surprised by an unex-

pected note in his voice.

"Do you think," he went on, "that you could learn to tell it any better if I—" he paused, and the color faded from his cheeks; then, boldly, collectedly—"if I were to give you a few lessons, Miss Throop?"

"A few lessons!"

As she gasped out these words, a divination of his meaning broke upon her. She staggered weakly to her feet and gave a low but wild laugh, that seemed all the more strange because of those large tear-blotches on her white face.

VIII

"Pemby Dalgrish isn't looking at all well," affirmed the Duchess of Down to Mrs. Aylesbury. "Has Ursula been treating him to any sort of severe shock?"

The younger lady smiled. "If she's refused him for the fiftieth time, I can't say. But why should it be any more of a shock than the forty-ninth?"

"Or the second, for that matter," growled her grace. "If I were a man, no matter how madly I adored a woman, I should never ask her more than twice to marry me. It's very much like scrambling for a card to some place where one has not been asked. Say what you please, all pushers are vulgar."

"If you're going to call true love by any such horrid names, I can only respond that you've shown me the first sign of having lost your perennial

youth."

"Perennial fiddlesticks, Anne! Thank heaven, I don't pose as anything but a withered old crone who eats, drinks, gossips and gambles. Those two men are both idiots to dance as they do at Ursula's fiddling. They ought to be whipped into shape à bâtons rompus. True love, as you term it, is all very pretty and pictorial; but that's no excuse for making ducks and drakes of our dignity."

"And you say that Dalgrish does not

look well?"

"Shockingly ill. At the Montagu-Prangs' dinner, last night, he sat next me, with a spectral cheek and a glazed eye. He talked little and ate less."

Dalgrish, beyond doubt, had felt in no mood for dining. But no one dreamed of the real reason for that change in him, which many had observed at the Montagu-Prangs' rather multitudinous feast. He had gone there detesting the necessity of being obliged to do so. But the engagement was sacred, and he dared not, at so late an hour, concoct some excuse which would only end in giving offense.

A few days before, Parliament had closed. He had seldom missed show-

ing himself in the House at all its sessions, and now, in the new leisure afforded him, he found certain business affairs awaiting his immediate heed. One of these he had attempted that same morning to exploit. It concerned a block of very small housesthose tiny houses, two rooms deep and two stories high, occupied by thousands of the poorer London folk. This valuable property, situated on the "Surrey side," his father had left to Dalgrish, and the rents drawn from it were an appreciable factor in his in-But he had always been conscientious with regard to its management, and he now journeyed in a cab across Waterloo Bridge for the purpose of discussing, with a superintendent who dwelt on the premises, some recent complaints on the part of the tenants.

At the end of his drive he carelessly dismissed the cab which had borne him thither, forgetting the fact that a return vehicle in this remote district would be impossible to secure.

It was high noon when he succeeded in finding the superintendent, and their meeting was then a matter of much storm and stress. Dalgrish seldom lost his temper, but he could strike harder blows on this account; and he struck hard ones now. Staines, the man whom he had trusted as an employee, received them in forlorn silence. Inwardly, it pained Dalgrish to verify, as he did, the accusations brought against this most faultful of stewards. One by one he visited various homes on the street, forcing Staines to accompany him. Everywhere the same unanswerable story was told. Bullying, extortion, periods of shameful intemperance, neglect of rational requests and demands, disobedience of precepts long ago made clear as the very basis of the agent's official tenure—the whole revelation turned Dalgrish sick as it grew upon him by stern and dismal degrees.

A salubrious morning had become a sultry afternoon before his disquieting investigations had ceased. He turned at last from his wearisome task, having promised the tenants all reasonable consideration of their requirements. Most of them were women with husbands away at work, and not a few were hysteric in their querulous outcries. He left Staines—a stout, florid man, with beady eyes and a loose-hanging mouth—in throes of severe, if somewhat factitious, remorse.

He walked angrily away, down the hot, ugly thoroughfare. Soon he comprehended the utter hopelessness of securing a cab, and then he bethought himself of the underground railway; no doubt one of its stations could not be far off. He stopped a flushed woman with a baby in her arms. The nearest station, he learned to his dismay, was almost a mile distant.

After a rather protracted stroll, he perceived that the street had assumed a less depraved air. At length he confronted a large public-house, which rose with an almost palatial massiveness from its humbler surroundings. "They might give me a sandwich here," he thought, and boldly opened one of the doors that seemed to guard an interior set apart for better-class custom.

The barmaid started with surprise on seeing him enter. She had served in West End places, and knew instantly that he could not be a resident of this transpontine region. Dalgrish, after seating himself at a table, and waiting at least ten good minutes. was served with three of the worst ham sandwiches that fate had thus far called upon him to devour. while, he surveyed the small apartment in which he sat. It was gaudily clad in gilt and crimson papering, and suggested, with its ornate gas-jets and its velvety emerald carpet, a somewhat expensive outlay. Beyond it was a draped doorway; evidently a second apartment lay yonder, at one end of which the bar and its gayglittering rear buffet curved, just as they did in this. Dalgrish had seen the same cozy and loud-hued haunts in more thriving parts of London, and it now struck him that, to judge by these dapper internal presentments, he might be lunching in some resort not far from Oxford Circus. But this was very far, and he had a dreary sense of the distance, as he rose and tossed upon the counter a ten-shilling piece. While the barmaid was changing it, he moved toward the threshold of the other room, and carelessly peered between the parted curtains.

This room was smaller than its companion, and appointed in much the same tasteless yet comfortable style. It contained but two tables, and at the further one sat a man, in a lounging attitude, with a glass of some half-consumed liquid at his side. The man's eyes were fixed steadily on a point before him, and both hands lay half-clasped in his lap. Dalgrish, on perceiving him, was about to recede, when something in the profile and the poise of head gave him pause.

He advanced several steps, unconscious of the act. Roused from his abstraction, the man turned and

looked him full in the face.

"My God!" said Dalgrish, below his breath. "It's you, Jasper Garth—you, alive, like this!"

A faintness, for the first time in his life, overcame him. He caught the back of a chair that stood opposite him, and staggered a little while he held it.

The man slowly rose. They faced each other, with a deep, mutual stare. For several moments not a word passed between them.

IX

A rew days later Lady Ursula left an "at home" in Belgravia and walked toward her own residence in Upper Grosvenor street. At her side sauntered Lord Melville.

"The season has begun to wane," she said, "and I intend to wane as

"All of which will mean about the same thing," he answered.

"Not for everybody."

"For some one whom I know, most certainly."

She ignored this. "Yes, Aunt Anne and I have resolved to leave town next week."

His face fell. "You're going to your seat in Warwickshire?"

"No; we've decided upon Trevor Court.

"Ah, so near!" he smiled, with evident relief. Trevor Court was an enchanting place owned by Mrs. Aylesbury, on the Thames, not far from Taplow. "Will you be there long?" he went on.

"Till September, surely. Then, if Aunt Anne requires it, we shall go to

Marienbad."

"Ah! So I shall have you close at hand for some time yet, anyway."

"Your sentence has a rather pro-

prietary sound."

"Proprietary? Yours has a wound-Think. Ursula"—he sound! leaned as near to her as he dared— "how sweet to celebrate your departure by the announcement of our -betrothal!"

"Those pink clouds over yonderare they not exquisite?" she mur-"They hang directly above the Marble Arch, I should say."

"Yes," he replied, with a gay dry-"How emblematic! The Arch means triumph, you know."

"But we don't see it; it's too far

"We can divine it, however. At least, I do. And the pink cloudsthey make one think of Tennyson's lines, after Maud has consented:

" 'Blush from West to East, Blush from East to West; Till the West is East, Blush it thro' the West.'"

Lady Ursula perceptibly quickened her pace. "Rather a tedious jingle, I've always thought, set in the heart of a most beautiful poem."

"But it describes a lover's rapture.

It would symbolize mine."

She made no response, and, after a slight silence, he spoke with new tones whose vehemence was quite untinged "You told me to-day by sentiment.

at the Desboroughs' that you had been having some pleasant talks with Heath Hammond of late. A strikingly sensible man is Hammond; just the sort of person to banish from your mind a certain odd hallucination. Did you chance to mention—your husband? Or did he do so?"

She turned her look upon him; it swept his face suspiciously. "I talk with Heath Hammond on many subjects. He is like an old glove, so easy and commode. He would not stab one," she went on, a hurt ring in her voice, "with so contemptuous a word as 'hallucination.'"

"Pardon me, Ursula! I take back the word. But what would you say if I could give you distinct proof that your husband died that day on the Carpentaria?"

Again she looked full at him, this time with a strong, plaintive search in her wondrously lovely eyes. Her pace slackened. "Distinct proof?" she repeated.

All men of honor suffer when they contemplate the possible toleration of a lie. But they suffer tenfold more keenly when the moment arrives at which a lie shall be taken into their lives and made an impetus of future action. Lord Melville felt that he grew pale under the gaze of this adorable woman, for whom he was soiling himself with the first ignoble smirch that had ever tainted his record.

"I know some one," he said, "who is prepared to tell you that she saw your husband die."

"Die-saw him die?"

Ursula, for an instant, caught the speaker's arm. But her clasp quickly left it, and she stood motionless beside him, with an air of inquiry, disciplined yet desperate.

"You take it most seriously," Lord

Melville blurted forth.

"Why not? why not?" she retorted, her eyes riveted on his face. Her cheeks were touched with scarlet and her chin was tremulous, but there came a swift resumption of calmness.

"You have some news, then?" she

presently queried; "some proof, I mean?"

"Yes." And he mentioned Miss Throop's name as they again con-

tinued their walk.

"Miss Throop!" she exclaimed, with almost a sneer. "I heard long ago every word that *she* had to tell! And, somehow, of all the survivors, I pitied her least. She always seemed to me insincere, untrustworthy."

"But you did not doubt her story?"

"Oh, no! Still, it contained nothing of any particular moment. She merely

saw what others saw."

Lord Melville's nerves were steadier, now. He had taken his first plunge; the inevitable sense of repulsion and self-disgust had followed. This he had expected, and had feared besides, half-doubtful if some impetuous rush of compunction might not tempt him to fling over his entire deceptive plan. He knew, now, that he would persevere in it with unrelaxing stress.

"Miss Throop," he said, calmly and evenly, "saw a great deal more than anybody else in the boat; and she is prepared to give you a full account of her observations, far clearer than those of the others, because she was less agitated at the time, having no child or relation to guard or comfort. All the other women, as you may perhaps remember, were in this respect differently placed."

"Yes," his hearer assented, "that is quite true. But why should Miss Throop speak more openly now than she did when we met months ago?"

He was quite prepared for this; he was, indeed, prepared for every endangering development. He had studied out his entire plan, as though it were some affair of statesmanship which his nimble and practised intellect had set itself ably to master.

"The woman," he answered, "felt timid and embarrassed in your presence. That, probably, is why you

thought her insincere.'

Lady Ursula gave a skeptic laugh. "I certainly did not notice either timidity or embarrassment. I asked her three or four direct questions. She

replied to them with seemingly entire self-possession. Her general manner conveyed to me no idea of falsehood. No, it was not that. I thought her a person—perhaps incorrectly—whom I should not care to trust."

They had crossed Park Lane by this time, and had reached the head of Upper Grosvenor street. Bewilderment or curiosity had caused Ursula to repress the briskness of her steps, and they now moved along at a loiter-

ing pace.

Her watcher had accepted his part; he forthwith proceeded to play it. "But can you not understand that this woman held back the whole truth from motives of mercy toward you?"

"Mercy toward me!" was her soft

exclamation.

"Surely. She saw much more than she told you. She was really the only woman in the boat whom fright had not reduced almost to idiocy. And as for Reuben Creech, he was in an almost demented state at the realization of his awful responsibility, after the other sailor, who was to join him in any possible effort with the oars, had tumbled into the sea."

"But you spoke of mercy toward

me, Melville."

"Why should poor, ignorant Throop not have felt it? Ah, you've called her insincere! In her silence I admit that she was. What could have been more natural? Did she suppose it would not give you great pain to hear from her that she had seen your husband die?"

Ursula grew pale as the knot of white roses on the breast of her violet gown. "Then—she saw—him die?"

"Yes."

"You believe her?"

"Absolutely."

She scanned his face. "When did you see her?"

"Very recently."

"Why did you see her?"

"I suspected that you had not yet learned the truth."

"You sought her out, then?"

"Yes."

"And in London—this vast sea of

people—you found her?"

"I found her," he said, with perfect firmness; "why not? The name isn't a common one. There is a London directory, you know."

He had fronted her little storm of questions with unflawed serenity. To wear the mask grew easier for him each

moment.

"But why did you specially seek out this one woman from among all the

others?" Ursula persisted.

Without a hint of hesitation, he said: "The others were scattered about, in various parts of the country. Miss Throop, as I discovered, lived in London."

"You did seek her out, then?"

"Yes."

"With what motive?"

"Oh, as if you didn't know, Ursula!"
"You thought there might be some

concealed evidence, like this?"

"I thought so. The hope, I admit, seemed a forlorn one. But I've gained my reward; that is, my first reward. It's for you, dearest, knowing yourself beyond all dream of doubt Jasper Garth's widow, to pay me back in different, yet far more precious coin!"

Again she turned toward him, slightly lifting one hand. "Ah, it's lucky, Melville, that I know you to be the soul of honor!" As he flushed violently, a thrill of penitence assailed her, for she at once concluded that he had colored from indignation alone. "Pardon me," she went on; "I could never, even remotely, fancy that you wouldn't fight fair."

These words were coals of fire to him. But their very sting reacted goad-wise on his perturbed courage. "Why call it a fight?" he asked. "On my part it is so tremendously opposite from that! Indeed, it's the struggle to secure an armistice, a truce, an absolute peace—the peace that will come to us both, I trust, when, by consenting to bear my name, Ursula, you've made me the happiest man alive."

Unresponsive, she strolled along at his side, until they presently reached her dwelling. Here she paused, and, with a matter-of-fact quietude, spoke again:

"Is it your wish that I see this Miss

Throop?"

"Is it not yours?" he replied, adroitly mingling surprise with re-

"But if I fail to believe her

story——?"

"You will believe it," he said, showing so deft a simulation of entire confidence that the gold in her strangely beautiful dark eyes kindled vividly. "When you have seen her as she is now, when you have heard her as she speaks now, you must believe it!"

She slowly inclined her head. "Well, I will see her. Shall it be here, at my home?"

"At hers."

"Hers? Where is that?"

He told her.

"I don't know that street," she "Near Tottenham Court Road? Oh, yes; in the Middlesex Hospital region, I suppose. I've been there; I know more or less where you mean.

"Naturally. Is there a woman who visits the poor oftener than you and Mrs. Aylesbury—that is, when your

poor aunt can get about at all?"

"Hush!" she reproved. "Our charities, our visits to the sick and destitute, are nothing compared with those of many another Englishwoman in our And you wish me to go with you and see Miss Throop? When?"

"To-morrow, at eleven, if you will. We'll drive there quietly in a cab. And may I beg of you to let this whole matter be a secret between our-

selves?"

She deliberated. "I'm not even to tell Aunt Anne?"

"Not even her. Will you promise?" he pleaded.

"Well, yes."

"Will you promise sacredly, Ur-

She gave several quick nods. yes; I promise sacredly. I won't even tell Heath Hammond!"

"Heath Hammond! Good ens, do you tell him everything?"

She laughed. "He's my counselor, you know, in so many ways. I bring him all my complaints, all my troubles, as if he were a father. Sometimes, I think he doesn't listen to them all."

"To-morrow, then, at eleven. call in a cab at eleven sharp. You're not going to any of the festal things to-night?"

"I think not—after what you've just been saying." She held out her hand, let it linger in his for the briefest instant, and then turned away. Immediately, he heard the sharpest rat-tat-tat sound at the shining doorknocker. "Go, I must think," it seemed to command him; and he passed onward toward the open space of Grosvenor Square, surrounded by lordly mansions and holding, rail-circled and almost towerlike at its centre, the intertangled verdures of high, full-foliaged trees.

The very drama of his duplicity had thus far numbed conscience. But now it woke, vitalized by solitude. Still again must it wage the immemorial mental battle. Passion must break a lance with it. "A lie is a lie," urged Conscience; but Passion returned, with precipitate selfexculpation: "I make for myself my own pathway, since fate balks me

with, 'No thoroughfare'!"

X

LADY URSULA, on the following morning, was prepared to keep her promise. Mrs. Aylesbury, tomed to her goings and comings, asked no questions. Seated in a back room, with a new novel that engaged her, the elder lady looked up at her niece for a moment as the latter transiently appeared, and then glanced at a near clock on the mantel.

"Eleven. You're going out? You'll be back for luncheon, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes."

Then Ursula went out and found Lord Melville waiting in his cab. They at once drove off together.

Miss Throop had been drilled so forcibly and skilfully that her recital was a marvel of hypocrisy. A cleverer woman would have enacted her rôle with less convincing effect. But she was just stupid enough, just ignorant enough, just enough penetrated by the sordid sense of rich future guerdon, to hug with slavish obedience the exact lines of her previous careful tuition.

Lord Melville had prepared her for every emergency in the way of radical questioning. She told her tale, and she told it like a witness who neither invited nor anticipated negation. But attempts at negation came on the part of Ursula, came with searching interrogatory, came with even occasional revealed desire to trip her up, confuse her, confound her, make her swerve from this statement and feebly nullify that. Silent, unmoving, Lord Melville noted the rigor of this crossexamination. So stringent, now and then, was the ordeal that he trembled for his pupil's equanimity. But he trusted, nevertheless, in the efficacy of his past teachings. They had been all over this sort of thing together, he kept telling himself, again and again. There was no chesslike trick on Ursula's part that he had not foreseen at rehearsals.

To-day, Miss Throop's attire was both clean and neat, while her hair, which she had carefully brushed, hid the more startling outlines of her aggressive ears. The great, limpid gray eyes which formed so anomalous a feature of her coarse face, veiled their bolder rays with a demureness that matched well her low-voiced replies. Melville Barclay had not only tutored her in the matter of what to say, but he had shown her how to say it and how to look while it was said.

The young woman—while he cloaked keen observance of her behind an air of ordinary regard—aroused in him something strongly like admiration. True, her cause was a sinister one, but she upheld it, with surpassing tact and craft. Never,

after all was said, had instruction fallen upon a more adaptive disciple.

At last, Ursula deserted her forensic posture. It was plain that she no longer doubted. Yes, Miss Throop had seen her husband die! This admission seemed stamped upon her face with an unmistakable emphasis as she left the house in Goodge street.

Their cab was waiting, and, just before they entered it, he asked her what order he should give the driver. "Home," she at once answered.

While they were being rattled west-ward, he suddenly said, with a rueful inflection:

"You don't seem overjoyed."

"I'm amazed," she gave out, shortly.

"But you're convinced?"

"Yes; how can I help but be convinced? By the way, should I not have offered Miss Throop something? Did she not expect it? I—I forgot."

"She didn't expect it. I've helped her, in a moderate way." He still kept warily on his guard. "Nothing in the least extravagant. She's poor, and the sewing that she takes in doesn't count for a great deal. Nevertheless, I don't believe that people should receive handsome bounties for simply telling the truth. Am I not right?"

"Perfectly right."

They were speeding through Wigmore street, when he again spoke. "Ursula, you accept the truth, now. It is irresistibly broken upon you. This evening my cousin, Mrs. Yorke, has a small dinner—a kind of family affair—at her house in Hill street. May I not tell her—may I not let her make it quietly known among the other guests that our engagement has become a fact?"

She turned and looked at him, her softly splendid eyes dwelling not so much on his handsome face as on the entire presentment which he made of fine, patrician distinction. It came her mind after that, he possessed personal graces and far beyond favors the

wealth, the elusive yet magnetic gift of Dalgrish. He would appear before the world as her wiser and more felicitous choice. He had, besides, a great Parliamentary future. She did not love him, but she intensely liked him. And he had attested his own love by a pertinacity of courtship whose recent proof affected her with an actual clamor of protest. Why not answer him once and for all, here and now, with the word for which his brilliant blue eyes flashed their eager yearning? After all, it had been a race between himself and Dalgrish, and he had fairly won. Everybody had been expecting for months that she would make some sort of final decision between these two. over, he was rich, independently rich, and Dalgrish had far less lucre than If she married him, it could never be said that her own fortune, large as it was, had acted in the least way as a lure. She had not been happy with Jasper Garth, but there seemed every chance that she would be very contented with Lord Melville Barclay. To her husband she had given only friendship, and he had incessantly wearied her by seeking to convert it into love. On this other she would bestow friendship as well, but with a confidence, born of long previous acquaintanceship, that he would receive it with triumphant yet humble gratitude. Did she not, by this time, know all the crannies and crevices of his singularly sweet character? Dalgrish had his fascinations, but he also had his crepuscular moods. had never quite solved him. Matrimonially, she had gathered, he might not wear well. He was like a shore with bold, sunny heights and yet with darksome caverns. But Melville? Was he not a lake, blue as his own lucid eyes, and comfortably stormless? She felt her lips tremble with the unuttered word.

"Ursula!" he said, and slipped his hand covertly toward hers, gently crushing it within his clasp. "You consent? We are engaged?"

"Yes," she replied.

XI

"It's a pleasant disappointment," declared the Duchess of Down two days later to Mrs. Aylesbury. "You wish to seem non-committal, Anne, but I can see in your face that you think your pet has chosen discreetly."

"I always liked Melville," was the

soft answer.

"Of course," grunted her grace; "but, then, you always like everybody. You're the only person, not a nonentity, who does. You even like me. I'm universally hated by all with whom I come in contact, except your beaming self."

"Don't say that, Grace!"

"Why not? I've two grandchildren who loathe me, and seven or eight cousins who would like to cut me, but don't dare. Still, after all, I've my consolations. If I'm hated, I'm also feared. Fear is a splendid sceptre. I enjoy wielding it, too, in this wicked world!"

Mrs. Aylesbury smiled, very faintly. "By the way, Grace, I must thank you very much for that superb cheque you sent me yesterday. I've obeyed your instructions, though with much regret. I only wish that I could tell two or three of the good women who watch over that Asylum for Blind Orphans how nobly you've sympathized with their work."

"Bah!" scoffed her grace; "let's talk of more important things. We began with Melville Barclay's engagement to Ursula. Everybody is asking what Pemby Dalgrish will do. Have you or your niece seen him yet?"

Nobody, in a social sense, had yet seen Dalgrish. Lady Ursula had thought best to write him a short note, telling of her betrothal. It was carefully worded, and seemed to hint, though with much delicacy, that an answer would be needless.

A day later, Dalgrish left town, and passed more than a fortnight in strict seclusion on a small estate which he owned, not far from the Sussex coast. Here the London papers reached him, and in one of them he read the formal

announcement of "a marriage having been arranged" between Ursula and Lord Melville. By another, several days afterward, he was informed that Ursula and her aunt had quitted London for Trevor Court, "Mrs. Aylesbury's Summer residence on the Thames, not far from Taplow."

When he returned to town, August had begun, and all gaieties had vanished from roads and squares of the West End, leaving lines of torpid houses, long stretches of deserted streets. He had gone away like a wounded animal when hiding itself to lick its hurts. But in this dismal process he had found slight relief. Melville, he kept telling himself, had stolen a march on him; but how, and why? His political fighters had always admitted that Dalgrish possessed great nerve. This power of rigid outward control stayed with him now. He felt that he could face life and society once more, and he inflexibly meant to do so.

He had for months past believed that, if it ever came to a positive issue between himself and Lord Melville, he would prove the winning man. he had always meant to fight fair, and now he was tortured with a conviction

of treachery.

And yet had treachery really been employed against him? Would Lord Melville stoop to it? And of what nature, provided this were true, could it possibly be? Had it concerned some revelation to Lady Ursula on the subject of her husband? This was the most natural supposition, and yet what revelation of this sort had Melville Barclay the power to make?

Dalgrish, on the first evening after his arrival in London, strolled into one of his clubs. A few men whom he knew greeted him. He joined their small circle, and almost at once felt that the air was impregnated with pity. He strove to speak with liveliness, even jollity, and yet found no response. The men would have laughed and joked with him if they could, but a spell stiffened their lips. Dalgrish divined the whole truth, and went home that night with a heart full of new disquiet.

"I feel in my soul that I shall be saved!" More than once had Ursula told him of how those words, heard by Reuben Creech just before he himself left the Carpentaria, had sometimes a trick of ringing in her ears for hours. When they had last seen each other. there was not a sign that these same haunting words had ceased to visit her, that she did not still continue the slave of her delusion. And, while this delusion lasted, there had always been the pungent uncertainty as to her future marriage. Had Melville Barclay abruptly killed it? And, if so, by what means? "The whole catastrophe," he kept telling himself, "has been so sprung upon me!" He knew at least twenty women sufficiently well to seek them and ask them what gossip they had heard respecting this curiously dynamic occurrence. Many, of course, had disappeared from town, though others no doubt remained. And yet on none could he bring himself to pay a visit. Pride stood in the

Still, he yearned for some sort of definite information. At times, he found himself burning with such acute wrath against Lord Melville that he dreaded the consequences of their chance meeting. Yet he faced this probability by dining three or four nights in succession at a certain Pall Mall club, which they had both frequented for some time past. Here, one evening, he met a second cousin,

Mr. Ommanney Firth.

Firth was a gay man-about-town, with a slender figure, a slender little whitish-gold mustache, a slender mind and a very stout purse. He looked upon Dalgrish as one of the greatest men in England, and liked nothing better than to prophesy, at the big dinners he would give in his delightful Green-street home—where a slender little wife, with an intellect even slenderer than his own, usually presided -that "dear old Pemby" would one day be Prime Minister.

"This thing is a bombshell to every-

body," he now said, in swift, impetuous whisper. "She never gave a soul the faintest intimation of what she was intending to do. Lily is furious, as I needn't tell you. We haven't got a scrap of real news, don't you know? We imagine that, of course, you received some sort of—excuse me—congé. She must have seen you, or written."

"She wrote," said Dalgrish. Ommanney Firth always bored him, and, if it had not been for the ties of blood, he would now have snubbed him off his feet. Moreover, a certain thought had entered his mind. "You're down there, now, at Combethorpe?" he asked, quickly.

"Yes; we've been down for ten days

or so," answered Firth.

Combethorpe was a lovely place whose shaded lawns verged upon the river, and one which this millionaire kinsman would sometimes keep shut up for a year, and then open, with all luxurious pomps and dignities, as he had done of late.

"Trevor Court," continued Firth, "is quite near. We've met Lady Ursula and Lord Melville rowing on the river, several times. Lily was almost bent on cutting them, at first, but she realized the nonsense of that."

"And very wisely," offered Dal-

grish, low in his throat.

"But she hasn't called, though we were there first. Melville doesn't stay at Trevor Court. He has rooms at the Raleigh Inn—you remember it?"

"Oh, perfectly." Dalgrish laid a hand on Firth's arm. "I say, Ommanney, will you take me in for a few

days at Combethorpe?"

"Bless you, dear Pemby, we'll take you for all August, if you'll only come. Lily thought of Homburg, but the season here has fagged her out, and she feels too seedy to do anythin but loaf about the cottage and take occasional drives and boatings."

"Cottage!" ruminated Dalgrish, gruffly; "it's a great rambling palace."

"Built of wood, though," said Firth, humbly. He had always the good sense not to praise his own superb possessions either in country or town. "Come, dear fellow, and stay till you're tired of us. Only, don't bring a pistol."

"I sha'n't," laughed Dalgrish.

He brought instead, however, a bleeding and morbid heart. Lily Firth, his hostess, had always wearied him with her platitudes, but she had never seemed to him half so endurable as now. She was profuse in her sympathies. She drove out with her guest for miles behind the pair of fleet thoroughbreds that she managed with deft ease. At such times, she would pour eulogy upon Dalgrish, underrate his successful rival in every way, and hurl scorn upon Lady Ursula.

On a certain afternoon, as it happened, they came face to face, during one of their drives, with Lady Ursula and Lord Melville. Lily had just brought her rather heated horses down to a slow walk. The river was not far away, glittering from its meadowy environs. The road wound through a sweet wilderness of white clover, and here, girt with the Midsummer music of greedy bees, the newly-betrothed pair were wandering. Lily's carriage was upon them before they knew. Their eyes were lowered, but suddenly both looked up, and then four people recognized one another with abrupt quickness.

It was not a pleasant moment for any of them. Ursula's face turned scarlet, but she bowed. Lord Melville's hand went rather crookedly up toward the brim of his straw hat. Little Mrs. Firth gnawed her lips, but inclined her head, notwithstanding. Dalgrish seemed the only self-possessed person of the four. He grew pale, but he lifted his hat with quiet security. There followed, necessarily, a brief interval, which seemed to all ten times its length. Then the Firth carriage passed on, and the sudden ordeal passed with it.

Afterward, Dalgrish lingered along at Combethorpe. A small house-party assembled there, and most of its members he knew moderately well. An idea was growing in his distressed mind, though he revealed nothing of

it either to his host or his fellow-guests. For a long while he had been fond of bicycling, and now that Lily Firth was debarred by new social duties from taking him on any more long drives, he spent several mornings in wheeling excursions about the lovely surrounding country.

He had his desire, which was backed up by a distinct design. Sometimes, he approached so near to the picturesque inn at which he had heard Lord Melville was staying, as narrowly to risk an encounter neither aimed at nor shirked. His great wish was to meet Ursula, and to meet her alone. lawns of Trevor Court gave upon the Thames; but there were side gates to the estate, and from one of these, on a special morning, he saw her emerge.

She was perhaps a hundred yards away from him, when he first recognized her. She was coming straight toward him through a grassy expanse, wearing a big-brimmed hat that shaded her face from the glare of an un-Her light draperies clouded sun. fluttered in a strong, yet caressing breeze. It seemed to him that he would have known her form and step among those of a thousand other wo-On her own side—possibly because the sunlight was full in her eyes -she evidently had not recognized him at all. In a trice he dismounted from his wheel, and drew it under the shade of a cluster of elms that bordered the road. It was then that Ursula visibly perceived him; but she was already inside the grove. flashed through Dalgrish's mind that here might be a place of appointed meeting between herself and Lord Melville. He saw her change color, as he lifted his hat.

"Good morning," he said.

"Good morning," she returned, faintly.

XII

Never in the House of Commons had Dalgrish—always renowned there for his attribute of firm self-governance —shown a severer calm.

"I suppose this nice weather," he said, "has tempted you into a morning walk."
"Yes."

His eyes were full on her face. met their gaze, unsteadily. In a certain sense, he had her at his mercy, since she was yet the prey of embarrassment.

"I am not sorry that we came across each other like this." She made a little upward movement with one hand, but he went on, coolly: "Oh, I've not any reproaches. But I have a question or two, Ursula, which I think it my right to ask."

She pressed her lips together, and "Well?" she at gave a slight nod.

length brought out.

"Are you soon to marry Melville Barclay?"

"In early October," she answered.

"That is certain?"

"Yes."

"Are you now satisfied that your husband is dead?"

"Yes."

"Did Lord Melville make this plain

to you?"

She looked at him haughtily for a second, but he at once laughed with sharpness, though not impolitely. "Ah, that is absurd between you and me!"

"What is absurd?" she questioned, glancing beyond him through the trees, with so nervous an air that he at once guessed whom she expected.

"Hauteur is absurd," he said. "I must repeat my quesgently.

tion.

"I will answer it only in this way," she affirmed, with worriment and defiance oddly blended. "I have accepted Lord Melville because I believe my husband to be dead."

"Then," Dalgrish shot back, "you down that he has had any hand in this matter of your new and sudden be-

lief?"

It was only defiance with her now. "I have given you your answer."

"Ah!" he said, with one of the cold smiles that she knew so well; "then he has produced some sort of testimony

which you have received with credence. And he has also made you promise that you will not explain its nature."

She started. The fascination of his keen intellect, always so admired, had become strong upon her during those few words.

"You've no reason to do more than

guess this."

"Pardon me; I've every reason to feel certain of it. Lord Melville has played just the game I suspected. He has got somebody to tell you some sort of story. Come, now; who is the person?" He paused a brief moment. "You don't reply. It is because he has sealed your lips by a promise of silence."

"You don't know this!" she ex-

claimed.

"Bah! I've spent half my life in tracing human motives. It's my trade as a statesman—or politician, if you prefer. I'll even go so far as to hazard this: he has gone to one of those women who were survivors from the Carpentaria wreck—"

"Ah!" she cried, recoiling, frightened for an instant by this inflexible astuteness. "What are you saying?"

"—and he has paid one of these women to tell you some trumped-up tale of having seen your husband die. It isn't at all the sort of thing that I once dreamed Melville Barclay capable of doing. But, no doubt, he holds to the motto, 'All's fair in love and war.' However, let me tell you that, if any of those women did work this change in you, Ursula, she spoke a paid-for lie. And, if it was Reuben Creech, he also——"

"It wasn't Reuben Creech!" she dashed in. The next moment she stood with clutched hands, hating herself for the self-betrayal conveyed by

this rash little interjection.

"I see. Then it was one of those women." He gave an ironic shrug. "There's no wizardry in my deductions. How otherwise could you possibly have become convinced? It isn't as if we had known each other since the middle of last week. Your de-

lusion wouldn't have died so quickly if its throat hadn't been cut. I am well aware of its tenacity, its longevity. At first, the whole affair looked as murky as that doleful weather in which I went up to London from Sussex and found desertion awaiting me everywhere—in more senses than one. But, since I have been here with my cousins at Combethorpe, my mental faculties have strengthened and cleared. know that Melville Barclay is horribly culpable. But it is still early enough, Ursula, for you to weigh the full gravity of his deceit—to avoid its ugly consequences."

He had put a great fear into her heart, though her doubt of his charge was yet deep. Meanwhile, his divination of the real truth impressed her as little short of miraculous, though in reality it was only the sure logical efforts

of subtle reasoning.

"I cannot believe that Melville would dupe me, as you imply," she

said. "No; it is incredible!"

Then the lover in Dalgrish spoke, and with a chill blast of satiric reproach. "Other things are incredible, too—that his mighty attractiveness, for example, should so long have been resisted. You have certainly shown astonishing self-control. How happy you must have felt, when he threw that white light of testimony upon your widowhood! 'None but the brave deserve the fair'; and quite naturally. But there are ways of being brave. Falsehood, when we give to it imperial proportions, certainly requires courage in the creator."

Ursula passed him, as he paused, and went to the further edge of the small grove. She looked beyond it, with one hand on the trunk of a tree and with head bent forward as if in eager watch. Dalgrish understood. "You expect Melville," he said. "You don't want us to meet. But there isn't the slightest danger of a vulgar scrimmage, I assure you. Unless I am greatly in error, we both know better than that."

Still preserving her vigilant attitude, and with eyes that peered down the tawny ribbon of sunlit road, she heard his voice grow nearer.

"But you accuse Melville of falsehood—of worse than—than that!" she

responded.

"I accuse him of trying to steal you, Ursula, instead of winning you by fair means. Yes, that is my accusation,

and my grievance as well."

She turned, and swiftly saw that he was very close at her side. And then he caught her in his arms, not roughly, but with force and tenderness combined. For a brief while he held her, and then on either of her cheeks he pressed an ardent kiss.

When, the next moment, he released her, Ursula stared at him with no shadow of anger in her beautiful eyes. The love of such a man, her suitor for so long past, touched her with a sudden awe. Besides, had she not dismissed him, sent him adrift, in cruel haste? This thought was burningly on her conscience, as she now said:

"Let me plead of you, in any case,

not to meet Melville here!"

He was very pale. "You pardon me?"

"No—yes," she returned; and the way in which she said this, with her abundant beauty confronting him, struck through all his native self-control a keen, rapturous note. He felt that, if she had asked him to let her put a bullet through his heart, he would have consented willingly to die by a hand so adored.

"Only go now, please," she added.
"Will you answer one question if I

go?" he said. "Do you love Melville?"
"He has made me grateful to him,"
she drew out, falteringly, after a slight
pause.

"Grateful! But do you love him?"
She lifted both hands, wearily, agitatedly. "It often seems to me that I love nobody living except Aunt Anne."

He stooped, caught the leaf of a tall weed at his side, and slowly tore it into fragments. "How can you marry Melville, knowing he has lied to you?"

"I don't know; neither do you."
"But if I could prove---?"

"How could you prove?"

He was silent, brushing from his fingers with a handkerchief the moisture left by the juicy leaf he had just destroyed. "Suppose I could prove more," he let fall, a little later. "Suppose I could prove that your husband is still alive?"

"Still alive!"

She grew suddenly white, and reeled, catching the slim-stemmed bole of a young elm that grew in the shade nearby. But she waved him away as he approached, and righted herself with no apparent strain.

"Is he alive, Pemberton?" she asked, with a terrible earnestness.

"Tell me, tell me!"

"Here is Barclay now," he replied. He had glimpsed him through the tree-trunks opposite, as he came swingingly across the grassy distance. "You know where I am. You may write me any time during the next four days. Repeat to Lord Melville, if you please, every word of what I have said——"

"No, no!" she exclaimed, leaning toward him, with parted lips and wide eyes that hungrily glistened. "I shall repeat nothing. Melville must go north, to Durham, to-morrow. His mother has been taken most seriously ill. Pray come to-morrow afternoon, say by five; will you not? I shall be on thorns till I meet you again."

"I shall try to come," he said, and passed quietly out from the shade into the sunshine. As he mounted his bicycle and rode away, the white, alarmed face of Lady Ursula glimmered toward him from the gloom of the grove, like the pure disk of some

majestic flower.

"Melville has played a bold game," thought Dalgrish; "I'll play a bolder. And the end is not yet! 'Winners first, losers last,' says the proverb. We shall see what we shall see."

XIII

"Good evening."

Lord Melville was the first speaker,

Dalgrish the second. They stood face to face at the porch of the Raleigh Inn, not far from Trevor Court. It was after nine o'clock in the evening of that same day on which Dalgrish and Ursula had held their talk.

The two men stood looking at each other in the dimness, after their lowtoned and colorless exchange of salutations. Each recoiled from the farce of a handshake. Lord Melville, in the rôle of host—if such a term be admissible—felt the necessity breaking the silence.

"May I ask you to enter?" he said, with a wave of one hand toward the lighted hall beyond. "Allow me to

lead the way."

They were presently seated together in a small room on the groundfloor, furnished with some smartness and containing a large central table of polished oak, on whose lustrous surface many journals lay carelessly scattered.

Lord Melville had placed himself on one side of the table; Dalgrish had sunk into a leathern arm-chair almost directly opposite.

"I must thank you," began Lord Melville, "for meeting me here as I requested you to do in my note of this afternoon."

Dalgrish gave a distant bow, and

that was all.

"My reason for desiring your presence is plain and simple enough. Lady Ursula told me that she had met you this morning. She told me much, perhaps all that you said. It cast a reproach upon my honor as a gentleman."

"It decidedly did," returned Dalgrish.

Lord Melville, who had been somewhat pale, now flushed a little. "In ordinary circumstances I should feel inclined," he continued, "to ignore the charges you made. But, as matters stand between us, I can comprehend your wounded feelings, and can even sympathize with them.'

Dalgrish took out his watch and glanced at its face, not insolently,

but with a fatigued air.

"To the point, if you please," he said. "I accused you of having bribed one of the survivors of the Carpentaria to state that she had seen Jasper

Garth perish."

"A serious accusation," returned Lord Melville, with a sort of pallid, flickering smile. "This is not the House of Commons, pray remember. There we may now and then have verged upon insulting each other, but here-

"Oh, bosh!" brought out Dalgrish, with a faint flourish of one hand. "If you lured me here to try to punch my head, you're a very foolish person. I'm not certain that I'd even resist you. I'd simply feel like having the satisfaction of seeing you dragged into a police-court; and rest quite sure that I'd manage afterward to throw a rather searching light upon your motives of assault. Some people think there's too much law in England, and, generally speaking, they're right. But our monstrous network of legal protectiveness is, after all, a marvelous safeguard against bullying. talk about your 'honor as a gentleman' has a rather eighteenth-century sort of sound. You've just referred to my own 'wounded feelings.' think 'disgust' would have been a terser and better definition. However, let that pass. I'm accustomed to the unraveling of skeins; so are you. I seem to have unraveled one now, and I said as much to Lady Ursula this morning. I didn't come here to lose my temper, or to see you lose yours. My accusation has, of course, been made. Disprove it, and I will humbly apologize. You can't afford to let me retain it, as you're very well aware. I'm not an ordinary individual, in the sense of public position; neither are you. We've fought fights before now, and I admit that you've worsted me more than once. Again, more than once I have worsted you. But this is probably our most serious contest. I claim that you must have held communication with one of the Carpentaria survivors. Am I wrong?"

Dalgrish had spoken with rapidity, but in a voice of the most ordinary Every word that he had uttered cut like a lash, and he knew it. He was well aware, too, of certain differences between himself and the man with whom he dealt. Both were adroit politicians; both had exceptional intellects and wide worldly knowledge. But Melville Barclay's emotional nature was far less under control than his own. Yet he had not once quavered. And soon Dalgrish, who had expected vehement counterblows, was smitten by the most poignant surprise.

"You ask if you are wrong in claiming," said Lord Melville, "that I have held communication with one of the Carpentaria survivors. Well, you are

not wrong."

No fibre in Dalgrish's lean, grave face betrayed a hint of triumph. "Which survivor, may I ask?"

"Miss Throop."

"I recall her. I've talked with every one of those women in the past—as I think you told me that you also had done—and of the whole group none struck me more unfavorably than the shallow, ill-informed damsel you've just named."

Having planted both elbows on the table before him and propped his drooped head with either close-clenched hand, Lord Melville stared down at some big illustration in one of the journals, perhaps without even vaguely catching its import. Then he gave a sudden backward movement, folded his arms, and spoke many sentences, fluent, unimpulsive, yet replete

with apparent candor.

As far as it went, all that he uttered was absolute truth. He told of Miss Throop's advances and her subsequent statements. But he did not mention his own contemptuous treatment of the latter, nor did he touch upon those vigorous trainings which she underwent beneath his alert scrutiny. He discoursed of Lady Ursula's visit to her Goodge-street home, and of how impossible it had proved to shake her evidence in the least particular. But

he refrained from any allusion to his own keen anxiety, on this occasion, while she followed a line of verbal charlatanry which he himself had most carefully laid out.

When he had ended, Dalgrish got up from his chair. "Do you object," he asked, "to my visiting Miss Throop?"

Lord Melville, while slowly rising, smiled, lifted his brows, and then let his head drop on one side. "I was quite sure you would take that course! But unfortunately—" He hesitated.

With unmerciful sarcasm, Dalgrish caught him up. "I shall say of your course nothing so uncivil. How could I? Fate is to blame, not you. 'Unfortunately'! Oh, yes; quite so. Unfortunately, you would state, Miss Throop started yesterday for Kamchatka; or was it the South Pole? And you don't know her address in either locality."

Here Dalgrish walked to the door. He had snatched his hat from somewhere, and wore it as he crossed the threshold. Meanwhile, there broke from him a laugh of such acrid mockery that his listener was seized, just for one dizzying second, with a mad desire to spring after him and try another sort of battle than a verbal one.

But swiftly this frenzy vanished. A chill, inward shudder succeeded it. "I have blundered," flashed through Lord Melville's mind; "I should have known my man better." And he dropped back into the chair he had quitted, overmastered by mortification, dread and chagrin.

XIV

"My dear Ursula," said her aunt, the next morning, "here I am, able to walk about and enjoy myself with the first real resemblance to health that I've had in many a day, when lo! I find you looking ill and acting as if every inch of your body were in a nervous tingle. It's so disappointing! But, of course, I must feel consoled if Melville's departure for Durham, on so sad a mission, explains those yeux

cernés and that restless, unwonted manner."

There was the least vein of delicate satire in that last sentence. Ursula felt the color mount in her face.

"You mean, Aunt Anne," she said, "that my distress on Melville's account would surprise you? Oh, I read between your words clearly enough."

"Is it on Melville's account?" smiled Mrs. Aylesbury; and she at once gave her niece's cheek a caressing pat. "I'm immensely glad if it is!"

"You think I don't care for him."

"I have my anxieties, dear."

"But you forget," said Ursula, drawing herself up with a dignity that tried to mean remonstrance; "I've engaged myself to him!"

"So you have, Ursula; so you have!"
An unconscious little sigh went with

the words.

"You don't believe that I care for anybody except yourself!" cried Ursula, with a forlorn note that her auditor plainly detected behind her forced humor. "Don't be so sure of your complete sovereignty, please!"

"I should like very much not to be," said Mrs. Aylesbury, kissing her. "I'm quite willing to share my throne."

"That's ungracious!"

"No, darling; it's only wise. I'm getting to be an old woman, and, if I once saw you the loving wife of a man who loves you as much as Melville does, actual old age, when at last it came, would be shorn of half its ills."

Mrs. Aylesbury, for all her vaunted healthfulness, grew somewhat fatigued that afternoon; and her niece, knowing that a nap would be sought sooner or later, was not sorry that her time of seeking it should be a little before the hour of Dalgrish's expected arrival.

"I shall try to come," he had told Ursula; and for certain reasons, needless to name, she burned with longing that

he would.

She was not fated to disappointment. At three o'clock he presented himself, and she received him in a room whose open windows looked forth upon great billows of foliage, grassy terraces, and an Italian effect

of urn or statue palely silhouetted against deep malachite backgrounds.

"You've a little paradise here, in Trevor Court," he said, drawing off his gloves. "I remember telling you so when I last came."

"Don't speak of paradises," she replied, with an impatient yet melancholy head-toss. "You have made life seem anything but paradise to me!"

He looked at her for a moment, and read in her face and air the signs that had so recently disturbed her aunt. They made her more beautiful to him than ever, and he was thrilled with a wish to offer prompt comfort. But all his plans were laid. He had spent a sleepless night at Combethorpe, thinking how he might not only delay her October wedding, but render it a fixed nullity besides.

"Oh, I see," he said, seeming to meditate. "You mean what I let fall

yesterday---"

"About him!—about Jasper Garth!" Her look was fiercely inquisitive; her voice a high, entreating whisper.

"I merely said 'suppose,'" he mur-

mured.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, giving a great sigh of relief; "then you did not really mean it!" But here she clouded with anger, and flashed on him a scornful look. "It was only a cruel bit of bravado, then! How contemptible!"

He leaned back in his chair for a second, closing his eyes, while disdain bent to a sardonic curve the line of "Oh, Ursula!" he his thin lips. cried, appealingly, sitting bolt upright and flinging both hands out before him, with untold disgust in the gesture. "You talk of cruelty, bravado and things contemptible! Pray, did Melville Barclay, before his trip into the north, tell you of how he wrote me a note yesterday, begging that I would join him at the Raleigh Inn? No? I thought not. But he got me there, though I knew his motive was one of fear alone."

"Fear?" she repeated.

"Why not? He had not foreseen that I would guess the secret of his influence over you. He learned from you yesterday what entire frankness I had used toward his conduct, while discussing it there in the grove. He thought, last evening, that he could carry things off with sublime impudence. I had consented to appear. There I stood, and in a little while he would sweep me off my feet. Did he deny that he had interviewed, very recently, one of the Carpentaria survivors? No; that was his handgrenade; he exploded it under my nose, and then awaited the annihilating effect. But, somehow, that didn't occur. I continued to exist, and I told him, in plainest terms, that he was pedestaled on sham. The moment I proposed a visit to Miss Throop, he began with, 'Unfortu-I was quite prepared for the nately.' discouraging adverb. In this particular, he has covered his tracks. Miss Throop would have to be hunted for, let me assure you, by a posse of detectives, and then she might not be found."

Here Ursula obstinately shook her head. "I can't believe that she has been bribed, Pemberton. I saw her; I questioned her over and over again. She was never once even faintly confused. She stood without flinching the most difficult mental search."

"Yet she has now left England, rest certain, with Melville's guineas in her

nurse ''

"I was coming to that when you broke in. She has friends, distant relations, in Australia, who were always good to her. She told me herself, when I last saw her, that they had deeply pitied her for having sustained, on the Carpentaria, a loss of twelve hundred pounds—partly her savings and partly an inheritance from her dead mother—and that they had sent her an invitation to come and live with them, which she had decided to accept."

Dalgrish's face, in all his turbid Parliamentary harangues, had never expressed a more caustic acerbity.

"And you probably gave her a handsome cheque? Eh, Ursula?" "I wished to offer some reward. I mentioned a hundred pounds; but Melville——"

"Stringently interposed. I was sure

you would say it."

Ursula bit one of the lower corners of her lips. "Oh, that is the way with a man of your mind and your methods! You are always sure of what one is going to say before one says it!"

"Not always. But the alphabet of deduction isn't precisely like a problem in higher mathematics. Miss Throop learned a lesson, and I concede the full capacity of her tutor."

"But you are making Melville out

to be a scamp!"

"What is self-evident requires no demonstration."

"You've never before breathed a

word against his integrity."

"It takes a great deal of life, now and then, to test character." An added hardness possessed his features. "Think, Ursula. He sought this woman out. He was constrained to accede that much. He did not dare to state any such absurdity as that she went to him with her new dramatic tale instead of to you. That first step not merely lays him open to suspicion: it incriminates him."

She seemed to weigh these words in pained silence. Then, with sharp challenge: "No, no! I can't accept your wholesale charge! It's prejudice—it isn't proof!"

She saw one of his hands tighten into

a knot.

"Give me time! Only give me time, Ursula, and I'll make it proof! You spoke of marrying him early in October. It is not yet mid-August. Australia is far away. Still, I can use strong efforts to have this woman found. There is even a most decided chance that she has not left England at all. Promise me that you will delay the wedding until I either fail or succeed."

"I will not promise!"

Dalgrish watched her for a slight while in this rebellious humor. Then he slipped from his chair and went toward the open window that gave upon the enchanting garden. With his back turned to her, he remained motionless for many seconds.

"Well," he said, slowly, veering around and facing her, "I have discovered just what I wished to dis-

cover."

She laughed, mockingly. "What a Machiavelli you are! Do you mean to tell me now, that you had some subtle and deep-hidden motive for seeking to

postpone the wedding?"

"You may call it that, if you please. I wished surely to find out—and I have done so !-- the full force of your attachment for Melville Barclay. can scarcely blame me in the matter of this attempt. I had the right to push inquiry, to observe how far some spur of fancied gratitude was goading you, Ursula, and how far the stimulus of the real love. This, I say, was my right; none has a better. If you have cared, all this time, more for Melville than for me, you have concealed the preference with a skill only explainable by coquetry. And I see that you have cared. Ursula, it was cruel of you!" His voice now became glacial, and his brows fiercely darkened. "Well, you deserve your punishment, though I shall not be glad to deal it.

"Punishment?" she asked; "what punishment?" Something in his tones had touched her with a fresh pang of

terror.

He put his hands behind his back and walked placidly up to her side. She shrank a little, not because she was afraid of him, but because she had a creeping horror of what he might say. And soon this horror deepened.

"Your husband is alive. I will show him to you visibly, in the flesh. I will show him to you the day after

to-morrow."

XV

AFTER she had held a half-hour more of conversation with Dalgrish, and when he had taken his departure from Trevor Court, it might truly be said of Lady Ursula that she gained her own apartments in a state bordering on collapse. By degrees, however, came the calmness for which she hoped and struggled. At last she could think —reflect.

But the lull of storm in her spirit brought a longing for friendly intercourse. To whom could she go? Not to her Aunt Anne, whose revived health it would be cruelty to imperil with such eerie tidings. There was Heath Hammond, of course; there was always nice, companionable, sapient Heath Hammond. She would take an early train for town to-morrow, and throw herself on the stolid rock of his superior judgment and discretion.

But here a new consideration de-Were not her lips sealed? terred her. Had she not promised Dalgrish to keep silent until he released her from such pledge? She was to see her husband, but only on condition that she would say nothing until a certain mystery regarding his survival from the wreck and his present secluded existence in England should be cleared away. Oh, these promises that both her lovers were so eager to exact! In the case of Lord Melville, her bondage was now shattered. If Jasper Garth indeed lived, the story told by Miss Throop must, of course, have been apocryphal. On this subject she could at least speak freely. For why had Melville desired her secrecy except with an aim to thwart the possible investigations of Dalgrish? Fool that she had been, not sooner to have suspected his honesty! This keeping of Miss Throop in the background, this mantling of her disclosures with obscurity, this aversion to having even Mrs. Aylesbury know the substance of her revelations—did it not all point to the subtlety and craft of the determined deceiver?

She was thinking bitter things of her accepted suitor, when Mrs. Hatchett, the housekeeper, came to her with a certain annoying scrap of information.

"Eliza Todd wishes to see me, Hatchett?" she said, coldly. "I can't imagine why. What on earth could have brought her to Trevor Court?"



"That's what I says to her, my lady," returned Hatchett, in prim tones that harmonized with her spare form, severely neat attire and demeanor of rigid respectability. "But she talked a lot of rather hagitated stuff about wantin' to warn you against somebody, and 'ow it would be for your own good if you was only to 'ear 'er for a few minutes."

"Warn me against somebody?" murmured Ursula. "Was she—quite

sober, Hatchett?"

"Oh, yes, my lady. I wouldn't 'a' presumed to 'old any talk with 'er if she 'adn't been. She's dressed quite nice, too, and looks better as to 'ealth, my lady, than when she was in your service."

"I'll see her," said Lady Ursula, after a pause. "You may bring her

to me here, Hatchett."

Eliza Todd presently entered a doorway through which she had often passed before, and with the same easy, confidential step of former times. The willowy figure had lost none of its old grace; the fragile, almost patrician visage, with the sultry black eyes inherited from a French mother, had never worn an expression of more interesting reserve. The slim hands were gloved with true Gallic neatness, and the costume, thoroughly in fashion, was yet marked by a modest absence of the least glaring detail. She looked exactly what she had once been, the British maid-servant in a household of rank and fashion. Her entire personality addressed her watcher in terms of somber retrospection. For Ursula had once greatly liked Eliza She had borne with the woman until further tolerance verged upon humiliation. But, at last, a discharge had become imperative, while even then it had brought regret.

"Good afternoon, my lady," Eliza now said, dropping a decorous little curtsey, after just the right respectful advance.

"Good afternoon, Eliza." An impulse of memorial kindliness tempted her to add, "Be seated." But the past thrust in its veto just as the past had at first prompted leniency.

Ursula, leaning back in her armchair, surveyed the intruder quite unsparingly, as she continued:

"I hear from Hatchett that you

were anxious to see me."

"Very, my lady."

"That you wished—are these the right words?—to warn me against somebody."

"They are the right words, my

lady."

A slight silence followed. "Well, Eliza? And who is the 'some-body'?"

"Ellen Throop, my lady."

Ursula started. She felt herself flush. "You mean the Miss Throop who was saved from the Carpentaria?"

"I mean that same person," replied Eliza Todd, in the old familiar tones.

"What have you to say regarding Miss Throop? Do you mean that you wish to warn me against her?"

"Yes, my lady; I do mean that."

"You know her, then?"

"I've known her for a twelvemonth. I haven't had much luck since you sent me away, but I came to tell you, my lady, that this Ellen Throop is a shameful fraud. A year ago, when I was very poor, I lodged in Goodge street, in the same house with Ellen Throop. We often gossiped together, and I suppose I told her, with not the least harmful intention, of the years I'd spent as your maid. She often spoke of the Carpentaria wreck, but she never once mentioned anything about having seen your husband go down on the sinking ship, or having seen him fall into the water, or having seen him at all after she had got into the small boat. But, more than once, she referred to the story of Reuben Creech, the sailor, who said that he had seen Mr. Garth standing on deck, trying to cheer up a frightened group of passengers, and saying to them—"
"Yes, yes, I know," Ursula struck

"Yes, yes, I know," Ursula struck in, with an uplifted, forbidding hand. That old refrain, "I feel in my heart that I shall be saved!" rang once

more through her spirit. But now the intensity of its reminder accentuated by what Dalgrish had so lately said. Hence she was pale as death when her next words broke upon Eliza Todd.

"You mean, then, Eliza, that Miss Throop never knew anything at all concerning either Mr. Garth's death or escape?"

Incredulous laughter shot Eliza, and was then swiftly checked. "Oh, my lady! She knew nothingnothing whatever. It's rage against that deceitful, lying creature, that has brought me here now."

Ursula rose. She gave Eliza both

hands. Then she said:

"Now, tell me why you think Ellen

Throop a shameful fraud."

"It's this way, my lady," came the earnest reply; "a few days ago I went to see that woman, in Goodge street. Everything about her was changed; she wore fresh clothes; her worried look had gone; there was new carpet in each of her two rooms, and some of their poor furniture had been replaced by better. I stared round me in surprise; I stared at her in surprise. Very soon she burst out laughing, and said something boastful about her altered fortunes. But I'd no suspicion of the truth, my lady, until she mentioned my own name. I, as she now let slip, had been much concerned with the improvement in her lot. This confused me at first, and I taxed her with questions. But it was only after she'd got frightened that I forced her to make a full confession. She'd used the knowledge I'd given her of your your affairs, my lady." And now Eliza's head drooped very low. "Oh, it stabs me with shame to speak it, but I must, I must!"

"You need not, Eliza."

The woman flung back her head, showing how forlorn her face had be-"Need not, my lady?"

Did Ellen Throop admit "No. that Lord Melville had-paid her money?" The words seemed to scorch her lips.

"Yes, my lady; a great deal of

money. And he had schooled and trained her for days, before he would allow her to tell you a certain story a story altogether false."

Ursula made two or three slow, nodding motions of the head.

understand, Eliza."

"Oh, my lady! I'm so sorry if—it —cuts deep! But I couldn't keep any-

thing back!"

"Right, Eliza; thoroughly right. It is far best. And now, answer me, please: has Miss Throop gone to Australia?"

"To Australia? No, my lady, not at She no longer lives in Goodge street, but she's here in London. Her

address---"

"Never mind her address, Eliza. really do not care to hear it. It's of no importance to me; I shall never make use of it hereafter."

Eliza had gone. A few minutes after she had glided down-stairs, Ursula lingeringly followed. knocked at Mrs. Aylesbury's closed

"May I come in, Aunt Anne?"

She presently found Mrs. Aylesbury standing before her mirror, with a face

that wore a guilty flush.

"Really, Ursula, it's quite shameful of me to have slept so long! I meant only to have taken a half-hour's nap. I— But, my dear, what has happened?"

"Do I look so ill, Aunt Anne?"

"You look terrified; there's no other word for it," said Mrs. Aylesbury.

"I am!" cried her niece, bursting

into tears.

"Oh, my poor child! What-what

have you been seeing?"

"The world, Aunt Anne; the world, and the vileness and meanness of it!" Here Ursula threw herself, sobbing wildly, upon her aunt's breast.

Inside that same hour, she had wired to Heath Hammond at his chambers in town. "I shall visit you at your office to-morrow morning," ran her telegram. "I desire your counsel on a certain most important matter."

XVI

This was one of Heath Hammond's busy days, but Ursula, quickly shown into his presence at about eleven in the morning, had no suspicion that she might have angered, if seen, a roomful of waiting clients.

"I'm so glad not to find you desperately occupied," she said, seating herself near his desk. "I don't know what I should have done, if you'd been full of business, for I've lots to tell you

-really, lots."

Almost any other man thus situated would have uttered a despairing sigh. But Hammond, after his quiet eyes had surveyed her face—though somehow without seeming to do so-gently said:

"You appear excited. Is it any-

thing calamitous?"

"Calamitous! You've found just the right word. But you always calm me—I don't know why. You've calmed me already. How long ago is it since you congratulated me on my engagement to Melville? Well, never mind. Now you can take back your congratulations, if you please."

"Take them back?"

He has behaved villainously!" She hid her face with both hands, then dashed them away. At once, after this little surrender, she began to speak on, with volubility and Her sentences were firmness. rapid, so pregnant with terse exposition, that Hammond had soon mastered the whole gist of their accusations.

"This is all bad," he said, when she had paused, her cheeks two roses, her eyes two flashing stars. "It is all very bad. And you tell me that Lord Melville has gone away to Durham?"

"Yes; but I shall never speak to him again. The truth is, I never loved him. So my disgust comes easier, don't you see?"

"I see," said Hammond, with his wonted gravity. "Pardon me, Lady Ursula; but it was then—the other suitor?"

"Whom I loved? Pemberton Dal-

Oh, I've never loved either of Don't look at me, Heath Hammond, as though you thought me the weakest and most contemptible woman in the world!"

"I am not looking at you with any

such conviction," he answered.

"But you feel it! I'm sure you feel it! I feel it now! Still, recollect, please, they were both men of intellect—resourceful, attractive, subtle, versed in every diplomatic art."

"I freely grant it."

She gave an impatient, "Pshaw!" at 'Oh, you won't blame me, then! But I ought to be blamed. have had no real excuse for letting the long duel between them go on and on. As for Dalgrish— Well, I saw him We had a terrible talk. yesterday. He came to Trevor Court; he's staying near with his cousins. But I can't tell you what passed between He's made me promise complete silence. And yet Melville did the same, and only did it to conceal his treachery. I can't help feeling now that they've both been traitors—to me! Upon my word, I have half a mind to break my word—in this case of Dalgrish, I mean. What he saidwhat he agreed to do—was so terrifying!"

Over Hammond's genial, homely, inscrutable face a slight, an exceedingly slight change passed. "Terrifying?" he repeated, and reached out his long, muscular arm toward the desk. For a moment, his hand moved a small paper-weight up, down, crosswise, as if it were some piece on a chess-board, which he hesitated just

how to place. Then: "You could only be terrified, Lady

Ursula, by one thing."

"You mean—?" she feebly hazarded.

"News concerning your late husband."

She gave a great start. "Suppose it were that! I don't say it is, but suppose it were!"

The steady eyes of the lawyer met her own. "I'm reminded of something," he said, more slowly than usual. "My reference to your husband has brought it all back to me. You sanctioned, if you remember, my opening of that mysterious envelope."

"Yes," she assented.

"Well, it did not contain what you supposed." Here Hammond rose. "I must request that you will make yourself acquainted with its real contents."

He at once passed to an opposite part of the room, drew out a bunch of keys, and unlocked the door of a large, high cabinet. Thence, with little delay, he extracted an envelope, and took from it a closely written foolscap

paper.

This he handed to her. "The entire document," he proceeded, "is rather prolix. Your late husband was an over-fluent writer; he had not, somehow, the gift of condensation. You will perceive, however, Lady Ursula, that I have marked certain important passages. If you run your eye over each of these in succession you will soon secure a full perception of the whole rather strange memorandum."

Ursula, with the stiff paper crackling in her nervous fingers, obeyed this behest. She had read three or four minutes when a smothered scream left her. The paper dropped into her lap, then fell to the floor. Hammond picked it up. Meanwhile, his visitor was bewilderedly pressing a hand against either temple.

"I never dreamed of this! How

strange! how strange!"

"Your husband seems to have been ashamed," said Hammond, "that you should know, during his own lifetime, of this twin-brother's existence. evident that he would have spared no effort to keep from you any such knowledge. Nor is this, Lady Ursula, at all remarkable. The dissimilarity in their characters and careers must have been as striking as the resemblance between their persons. Your husband makes it plain that this brother, Ambrose, was from boyhood a most depraved and vicious being. Clearly, as years went by, Jasper employed every effort to save him. At home he was a

constant sorrow to his parents; at school he aroused in his teachers both grief and scorn. When you have read the whole paper from end to end, you will perceive that, as Jasper grew older, his attention was painfully turned toward a certain family taint. For several generations, just such irreclaimable derelicts as this twin-brother had appeared under the Garth name. He began to think, therefore, that the doom of Ambrose was sealed, while he yet strove, with the bad logic of his fraternal fondness, either to nullify or avert it."

"And he failed—constantly failed?" "From the lad's boyhood straight on, until they were men. All that part of the history is keenly pathetic. Reading it hereafter, you will realize how Jasper Garth must have suffered. His parents had both died before he was twenty. Ambrose's education in one of the Melbourne free schools had been fraught with misery for his brother. Twice he was threatened with expulsion; twice he had to appear in court and suffer fines for serious misdemeanors. At last, the school did expel him, and at the age of eighteen he behaved so shamelessly in a drunken street brawl that he was imprisoned for six months. But still your husband did not despair of him. On his release from prison, Jasper listened to his profuse avowals of repentance, and literally begged from friends the money and influence to place him in a capacity only a little better than that of common laborer on a distant farm. Here he remained for a space of two years, now and then writing his brother accounts of his mode of life, which, in reality, were tissues of falsehood. At length, he returned in rags, and bore near his right temple a deep, red, permanent scar, which his hair concealed, but which was the result of a blow in some tipsy fight, which for days had left him senseless and close upon death. The rest of this chronicle, Lady Ursula, is one prolonged series of persecutions, now stealthy and now overt, broken by a single interval of five years, during which Ambrose

served his time in an Australian prison for the commission of forgery. was released, only to continue his tormenting conduct toward Jasper, who had now begun the amassing of that great fortune which he bequeathed to you. There is no doubt that your husband's patience and self-control were supreme. But mortification was added to his sense of acute grievance. Ambrose possessed a physical vigor, a soundness of constitution far exceeding his own, and doubtless for this reason his reckless bouts of dissipation produced no material change either in his health or his looks. Meanwhile, his great resemblance to Jasper underwent no abatement. He would sometimes use this resemblance with daring insolence. Repeatedly, had your husband so chosen, he might have recommitted him to prison for obtaining large sums of money in Melbourne and elsewhere, on the strength of this same extraordinary likeness. Finally, your husband's powers of endurance reached their limit. But, even then, he was merciful to the insufferable culprit. He gave him a handsome sum of money, insisted that he should settle for the rest of his life in New Zealand, and that, if he was ever known to leave the island, prosecutions for past offenses would be commenced. that must inevitably lead to a tenyears' imprisonment, if not longer. Cowed at last, Ambrose took sail. From that hour until the wreck of the Carpentaria, Jasper never saw him again, though by private arrangement he kept continuously learning that his ultimate measure had proved successful. But you will see that he was always haunted by a double dread. feared that some one might tell you of his close relationship to such a scoundrel, and he also feared that the diabolic boldness of the scoundrel himself might cause him to appear in England—in London, even, at the very doorstep of his dwelling."

Heath Hammond had spoken in his usual matter-of-fact voice. As he ended, Ursula half strangled in her throat a convulsive sob. "What a light this all seems to shed upon Dalgrish's action!"

"Dalgrish's?"
"Yes—yes!"

"Do you not mean-?"

"Melville's? No, no; I mean just what I say-Dalgrish's! Oh, I can tell you of his behavior, now! Perhaps I may be wronging him—but that is for you to judge. let me collect my thoughts." She put her hand to her forehead, as though some dizzying tumult were at work there. "Dalgrish came yesterday, before Eliza Todd's astounding visit. He denounced Melville's deceit; he wished to delay my marriage—my marriage! how hateful the thought seems now!—until he had obtained proof that Miss Throop had been bribed lie. to he repeated something that he had said, or hinted, the last time we met. It was about—Jasper."

"But you hesitate," said Hammond, with a curious look forming and growing in his steadfast hazel eyes. "Could it have been—?" And, in turn, he himself hesitated. Perhaps, unconsciously, she let the light clasp of her fingers touch his arm. "I think you have guessed. He is to show me Jasper—visible in the flesh! He is to show him to me tomorrow evening, there, near the

grounds of Trevor Court."

They exchanged a long look, deeply significant on either side.

"It will not be he," said the lawyer.

"You believe not?"

"I am certain."

"Then—" she began, and stopped short.

"It will be the other, I think," said Heath Hammond, drily.

XVII

When Ursula returned to Trevor Court that afternoon, she went straight into the presence of her

"Don't tell me that I look fagged out," she said, a little plaintively.

"I won't," returned Mrs. Aylesbury, who had already begun to think ineffable things of her niece's jaded appearance. She laid on a side-table the book that she had been reading. "Ursula?"

"Well."

"Give me your hand. It's feverish, dear. Won't you come and sit beside me, and let me know what went on between Heath Hammond and yourself?"

Her niece silently drew a chair close to Mrs. Aylesbury's side. Then she leaned her head on the other's shoulder, and her aunt slowly stroked, for some time, the wavy and silky folds of her beautiful hair. "Don't try to say it all out at once, love. Let me hear it gradually, by degrees."

Ursula obeyed. "How wonderful, how totally unforeseen!" her aunt, at length, said. "By the way, here is a telegram from Melville." She reached for a paper, and read its contents. His mother's attack had not been serious. Melville was coming up from Durham by an early train that same day. He might reach Trevor Court before evening.

"I will not see him!" asseverated Ursula. "I will never speak to him or notice him again."

him or notice him again."
"You need not."

"How shall we manage, Aunt Anne? Had I not better write a few words on a card, and let it be given him when he presents himself?"

"No, not that. I will see him.

Trust me."

"Not that!" cried Ursula. "You —an invalid! Never!"

"Tut-tut, my dissenter! I'm not an invalid any longer. I haven't been better in several years. The Duchess of Down, by the way, is coming here for a day or two. She may arrive, she writes, in time for dinner."

"In time for dinner! That's so like her," laughed Ursula, forlornly.

"She is determined to see me, before she goes to Vichy. And I shall feel so proud to have her find me well; it will touch her queer old soul, I'm certain. And now, Ursula, I am very determined—very!—that you shall not meet Melville when he comes. But he shall find me down-stairs, in the morningroom; something assures me that he will make haste to reach Trevor Court as soon as possible. I shall have that letter which Eliza Todd gave you just before she left, and which she forced Miss Throop to give her—the one letter which he was foolish enough to write his bribed adherent. I shall be very composed; you know, dear, that explosiveness isn't at all in my line. But I am with you heart and soul, and I mean to make him remember our interview to his dying day!"

It may have been an hour later when Lord Melville Barclay was shown into the same room where he had parted from Ursula such a brief period ago. Perhaps, for an instant, he had expected that the seated figure, some distance away, might belong to Ursula. But, seeing his mistake, he came blithely forward, in his charac-

"I'm so pleased to find that you are still well," said the newcomer, drawing nearer to where Mrs. Aylesbury sat. He put out his hand, but she had dropped her eyes upon her embroidery, and answered him while stitching slowly, as if the pattern required urgent heed:

"Thanks."

teristic way.

A slight silence. "Ursula got my wire, I suppose?"

"Yes."

Lord Melville threw himself into an easy-chair. "Then I shall see her soon?"

Mrs. Aylesbury let her embroidery slip sideways to the floor. She looked full at the man opposite. "You may see her again, Melville, but it will not be in this house, and, if you do see her, she will never speak to you as long as she lives."

She watched him whiten. Mixed with its pallor, a sort of horror seemed

to gather in his face.

"I was very glad to learn, Melville, that your mother's illness had proved only transient. She has been one of my dearest friends, and I pray she

may never know how you have shamed yourself with Ursula, and why your engagement to my niece is irrevocably broken."

He leaned forward in his chair, with hands locked in front of him. "What's this?" he shot out, huskily. "I deny——"

"No, no, Melville; it will not do. The evidence against you is too strong." Then, for some time, with lowered eyes,

Mrs. Aylesbury spoke on.

"Eliza Todd!" he presently cried. "An intemperate, thieving jade! Reformed, indeed! Her evidence! If Ellen Throop had not gone to Australia—"

"Melville! Ellen Throop did not go to Australia! She is here in England."

He clenched both hands. "If she has betrayed me, lied to me, is that my fault?"

Mrs. Aylesbury smiled, but with infinite sadness. From a high wicker basket, she took an envelope, opened it, and drew forth a sheet of note-paper.

"The writing, here, Melville, is unmistakably yours." And then she slowly read these words:

"'DEAR MISS THROOP:

"'I am called out of town for two days, and cannot again see you in Goodge street until Thursday next, at the usual hour. Then my drilling process will be resumed, and I warn you that I shall be a task-master sterner than formerly. You are doing fairly well, thus far, but you must permit me to tell you that in certain ways you have disappointed me. I wish you to stand cross-examination better. You are glib and cautious already, but you are still not half glib and cautious enough. A certain person will be-as I have often assured you—very exacting and excessively suspicious. I wish you so to put yourself in the position of one who actually saw the drowning in every harrowing detail, so that you will almost believe yourself, when the important moment of disclosure comes, to have ex-I wish you perienced all that you narrate. to identify yourself, like a skilled, emotional actress, with the entire fiction. enclosed cheque—pardon my humorous vein—may stimulate you in this course of adroit falsification. Keep picturing to yourself the Carpentaria as distinctly seen after you had been placed in the life-boat, and not as immediately having been swallowed up by fog, according to your former story of long ago. Try to learn by heart the exact words which, at my dictation, you wrote down during our second interview. Thus far you have stumbled in them, and I anticipate, next Thursday——'"

"The treacherous devil!" leaped, as if mechanically, from Lord Melville's blanched lips. "She swore to me, when I asked her for it, that she had destroyed this letter!"

He rose, piteously confused, almost

gasping for breath.

"Well, Melville," said Mrs. Aylesbury, with not a shred of scorn or triumph in her level voice, "you have heard enough?" She tossed the letter toward him. "There is your fatal blunder, though Ursula did not need it in the way of conviction. Yes, you are right. Seize it; crush it; destroy it. No one has any wish to use it against you. Neither Ursula nor I will ever speak. It is simply that you and she are strangers forever. You have a great career awaiting you. But, howsoever much you suffer, do not stain honor in the endeavor to suffer less!"

"Honor!" he cried, with dismal violence in his voice. "A great passion fights for its life, and to do so it must catch the first weapon that will serve." He laughed with intense mockery and walked toward the door by which he had entered. He stood there, with

his hand grasping the knob.

"Tell me, may she not hereafter—pardon my fault, folly, sin—crime, if you care to call it so?"

"She will never pardon you, Mel-

ville-never."

"Are you certain of this?"

"I am certain."

Mrs. Aylesbury might have added: "I am certain, because I know your love has never been returned." But she added nothing, and Lord Melville, opening the door and passing its threshold, called back, with the most melancholy voice that had ever escaped him or would ever escape him in the years to be:

"Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, Melville!"

And he went away. He had looked for the last time on all the lavish graces and greeneries of Trevor Court.

XVIII

Among the trees of that small grove where she had so lately met Pemberton Dalgrish at a similar hour, Ursula stole the day after Melville's dismissal from Trevor Court, with hesitating steps. Her dress was dark, though her face gleamed pale as a star above its dimness. She had gone but a few paces into shade from the outer meadow, when Dalgrish came noiselessly to her side.

In the vague light, he perceived her

pallor.

"So you kept your promise?" he said.

"Are you surprised?" she answered.

"No; but you seem alarmed."

"Is that strange? Are you pre-

pared to keep your promise?"

Something in her tone, her phrasing, made him slightly start. He peered into her face for a second, read there only what seemed to him a natural agitation, and said, almost under his breath:

"Oh, yes."

"You've been up to town, then, since I last saw you?"

"Of course."

"And you brought him?"

"I did not bring him; but he came at my wish."

"He's here, then, waiting?"

"He is here, waiting."

"For what?" she quickly asked.

"Just to see me and then to go away without a word? You told me that there was some mystery in the matter—that he couldn't, or wouldn't, address a word to me; that, perhaps, it might be arranged so that he would not even know I was looking at him."

"It has been arranged that way,"

said Dalgrish.

He did not see the irrepressible sneer that crept momentarily between her lips. "And afterward?" she pursued. "When I have realized that it is he, alive, saved from the shipwreck, shall I not know more?"

"Not to-night."

"You say that as if you were un-

certain of my ever solving this mys-

terv.

Dalgrish looked hard at her once more, in the dubious light. He was wholly unprepared for her present attitude. He had expected flurry and trepidation. These direct and relatively composed questions both disturbed and disarmed him.

"Let the to-morrows take care of themselves," he said. "Of course, he has some reason for keeping secluded, unknown, unrecognized."

"And he will not be aware of my presence when I am observing him?"

"N-no."

"Where is he?"

"At the further end of the grove, over yonder." Dalgrish pointed in a certain direction. "Will you come with me?"

"What is he doing now?" again inquired Ursula; "simply waiting for you to come back and join him?"

"That is all."

She was moving along on the soft turf, at Dalgrish's side. "But suppose I should go forward and speak to him?"

"You agreed that you would not—

unless I gave consent."

"Did I agree?"

"You promised."

"Did I promise? Oh, well."

"Please keep silence now," he enjoined, in the softest whisper. He touched her arm. The grove, just at this point of their miniature journey, was so dark that he did not discern how she shrank from the brief contact.

"If you go on for a yard or two," he at length continued, "and look through that opening in the boughs,

you will see him quite clearly."

Ursula obeyed. In the open meadow, only a few feet away, she perceived a face and figure that made her heart stand still. The features, the poise of limbs and frame, the general effect of dress—all was so vital and stinging in its portraiture that she afterward felt sure she would have swooned, then and there, if a certain premonition had not steadied her.

Still, even as it was, she had to strug-

gle against a dizzying qualm.

This passed, however, in a trice. She remembered what course she had come here with the fixed resolve to take, and pushed on, past the dusk of the grove, out into brighter air, straight toward the man, who seemed either his own ghost or his own sentient incarnation.

"Are you Jasper Garth?" she said.

"Are you my husband?"

The man stumbled backward, in plain consternation. Then, as if defiantly pulling himself together, "Yes, I am," he said. "Don't you see that I am?"

"Ah!" broke from Ursula. That answer had been enough. The voice

was not her dead husband's.

But she gave no other reply. Indeed, there was not time. For Heath Hammond, who had somehow never seemed to her as large and powerful as now, rapidly crossed her path. He, also, went straight up to the man she had just addressed. But he did more than Ursula had done. He held out his hand.

"Can this really be you, Jasper Garth!" he exclaimed. "Then the sea

has indeed given up its dead!"

Between Heath Hammond and Ursula everything had been predetermined. She drew nearer as the latter Then, in an instant, she saw spoke. Hammond sweep with one arm the hat from Ambrose Garth's head and toss back the hair from his right tem-There, like a welt wrought by some heavy whip, shone the red scar.

Hammond's next words came clear and firm. "There, Lady Ursula, you see that he is not Jasper Garth, but Ambrose Garth, your late husband's

twin-brother."

The man, thus coolly exposed, stooped and caught up his hat, with a snarl and a glare. He lifted his clenched fist, too, but neither at Hammond nor Ursula. A torrent of oaths poured from him, blended with reproaches at being thus duped and trapped.

It was Dalgrish at whom he hurled his wrath; and Dalgrish, having now come forth past the edge of the wood, watched him in utter silence, gnawing colorless lips. Before long, Garth moved out on the road, with a sidling, wary step, and an eye that roved distrustfully from Hammond to Dalgrish. Then, seeing that neither sought to detain him, he quickened his pace; and a big clump of elders, growing just where the road curved as with the curve of the wide valley itself, soon hid him from sight.

Ursula slipped to the side of Heath Hammond, who at once offered her his arm. She took it, and they went together toward the neighboring lawns of Trevor Court, without a word to Dalgrish, who in turn made them no

sign.

And Dalgrish, for longer than he knew, stood there among the thickening glooms, rigid, immovable. The flashes died from the river, the stars came out in the hazy heavens, faint and far, like white roses. But still he remained, stirless and mute.

His revenge, his passionate eagerness to prevent her marriage—to what mockery of dust and ashes had it all

miserably turned!

XIX

"HE will come this evening," said Mrs. Aylesbury; "I am sure of it. He cannot stay away."

"No, Aunt Anne," said Ursula; "he

will not dare to come."

"Oh, it isn't a question of daring, in such cases," declared the Duchess of Down. "It's a question of not being able to stay away. And, if he does come, you, Ursula, must not see him, since you've been through quite enough for one day. You certainly should avoid all further excitement, my dear, and either read something nice and soporific, or talk for a while with your amiable lawyer, Heath Hammond."

"Thank you, duchess," observed Hammond, coolly, just then appearing

in an open doorway.

"Did you hear? How dreadful!" "Still, I called sighed the duchess.

you amiable, didn't I? and you ought to take that as a great compliment from me." Here she turned to Mrs. Aylesbury. "As for you, Anne, under no consideration will I sanction your reception of Dalgrish, either. Melville Barclay has proved sufficiently trying, as it is. No; if my gentleman comes, I will greet him!"

And the duchess did. He had presented himself at Trevor Court in a desperate state of mind. Entering the same room in which Mrs. Aylesbury had talked with his rival on the previous day, he stood for a moment amid all its outlay of costly yet discreet embellishment. He decided that it was vacant, after his gaze had swept all its shadowy nooks and had grown accustomed to the delicate lights and tints of its wide interior. she come?" he asked himself. "Might she not refuse to meet him?"

And then, while he thus reflected, a small, stout shape emerged from a corner, in which a reading-lamp was almost hidden by a Louis Quatorze screen.

"Oh, I beg pardon," he said, recog-

nizing the duchess.

"You might beg a thousand, my dear Mr. Dalgrish," darted her grace, "and yet not be forgiven."

He stared, then drew himself together, stroking his chin, quite se-

renely, with one hand.

"Your society is at all times agreeable, duchess," he coldly brought out; but permit me to remind you that

you are not hostess here."

"Bosh, Pemberton! None of your trashy airs with me, please. I'm all the hostess you will have. Nobody else will see you. Neither Mrs. Aylesbury nor Ursula will ever notice you again. I could spread your disgrace through England in a single day, if I chose, and you're very well aware of it."

"I'm aware of nothing of the sort," he flashed back, though with perfect repose. "Any malicious charge you make I can answer."

"How?"

"Why, by simply saying that I was fooled by an impostor."

"Oh! you dare to state that!"

"I do. What would my answer be to your tattle?" he continued, lifting one hand and sending out a sharp click with thumb and forefinger; "that I was fooled and betrayed by the twinbrother of Jasper Garth, who told me a lying tale about the necessity of having his wife look upon him in order that she might not become a bigamist, while at the same time circumstances rendered it imperative that for the present he should hold with her no communication whatever." He walked toward the door.

Her grace turned as he calmly left the room, and flung herself on a lounge, burying her head in its pillows. He had gone, but somehow she felt he had not been entirely routed.

"He is impossible," the duchess said to Mrs. Aylesbury, as they sat alone together an hour afterward. "He is impossible, just as his uncle, the Earl of Clavering, was impossible."

Mrs. Aylesbury sat patting one of

her little hands.

"Oh, I suppose I deserved it," the duchess went on. "He stalked out of the room like an indignant prince. Heavens, what a lover he would make! Now that I think of it, I begin——"

"Not to forgive him! I won't have that."

"Oh, no; but both these men—and Dalgrish, as a human potency, towers above your bland Melville—have had a very hard row to hoe, my dear, very hard, indeed. Both madly adored Ursula. Both, in the general worldly sense, were honorable men. Both have had a sharp temptation to deal with, and both have succumbed. And both, remember, come of a stock that in past ages would quickly have settled their differences with pistols or swords. One can't help thinking, too, of the old adage, 'All's fair in love and war."

Mrs. Aylesbury raised a chiding finger. "No, all is not fair in either love or war! War will one day pass from the earth, I believe, simply because people will recognize that there is nothing fair in it. And, as for love,

which will never pass from the earth, it ceases to be worthy of its name the instant treachery and meanness invade it and disgrace it."

The duchess swept a tear from her eye. "What's become of Ursula?"

she asked.

"When I last saw her, she was seated in the billiard-room, watching Heath Hammond knock the balls about and talking to him, somewhat yawningly. Poor, faithful Hammond! I hope all this theatrical topsyturvydom hasn't bored his sedate soul to death. Ah, here they come!"

Ursula and Hammond entered the

room as she spoke.

"How long you stayed in the billiard-room!" said Mrs. Aylesbury, addressing them both. "Dalgrish has been gone a good hour."

"Oh, did he come, then?" asked Ursula, absently. "I'd forgotten all about him. I had so many things to

think of."

She rose and went up to her aunt. She took one of Mrs. Aylesbury's hands and held it between both her own.

"Heath Hammond and I," she said,

very sweetly and quietly, "have been making a discovery. For a long while past, he has loved me. For a long while past, I haven't cared about anybody but him. I didn't understand my own feelings; I only knew that it was pleasant to be near him and to hear his voice; even to hear, if I may so phrase it, his silences. And now everything has grown clear to both of us, and I have promised to be his wife."

Mrs. Aylesbury sat as if stunned by amazement. "Ursula," she at length dragged out, "this is a thunderbolt!"

"A providential one for me!" shouted the duchess, springing up from her She moved toward Hamchair. mond, with her waddling steps, and seized his hand. "You're a famous lawyer now, and, like most famous lawyers, you must go into Parliament. I know your politics; they're against Dalgrish's. In your very first debate, you shall thrash him, thrash him, thrash him out of his boots! And I shall live to see it, though all the doctors in the land should tell me I can't. And afterward I shall die content!"



A POSSIBILITY

HUSBAND (inspecting house and lot with a view to purchase)—The lot is absurdly small, my dear—scarcely big enough for a flower-bed.

WIFE (fresh from flat)—Er—couldn't we have a folding flower-bed?



AT THE CHESS CLUB

COUNTER—It's your move.
GAMBIT—Impossible! I moved yesterday.



WHEN IT WAS TOO LATE

SIMMONS—I used to be in love with your wife, Kimmons, but I got over it. Kimmons—Well, you needn't brag about it—so did I.



THE SONG

By Clinton Scollard

OUT of wind and sun and dew I would shape a song for you!

First from out the wind should be Happy hints of melody;
Little rippling slips of tone,
To the ear of evening known;
Tiny echoes of the shell
Breathed into by ocean's swell;
Lark-note, nightingale and thrush,
Rustling bough and river rush.

Then the sun should yield its shine, Golden words for every line; Glints of skyey amber ore—Simile and metaphor; Throbbing wave-beats, vital, warm, Passion in its noblest form, Morning's ecstasy of light After the surcease of night.

From the globe of dew should come Crystals of exordium; Essences of prismy blend Joining opening and end; And a close of flawless pearl, Whorl upon pellucid whorl; Every thought as virgin clear As the perfect parent sphere.

Out of wind and sun and dew I would shape a song for you!



REVENGE

THE PUG—What are you howling at the moon for?
THE MASTIFF—Oh, that's only an excuse. I'm howling to get even with my master for naming me Fido.



THE TWO AUTOMOBILISTS

ONCE on a Time there were Two Young Men, each of whom Bought an Automobile.

One Young Man, being of a Bold and Audacious nature, said:

"I will make my Machine go so Fast, that I will break all Previous Records."

Accordingly, he did So, and he Flew through the Small Towns like a Red Dragon Pursuing his Prey.

Unheeding all Obstacles in his Mad Career, his Automobile ran into a Wall

of Rock, and was dashed to Pieces. Also, the young Man was killed.

The Other Young Man, being of a Timorous and Careful Disposition, started off with great Caution, and Rode at a Slow Pace, pausing now and then, Lest he might Run into Something.

The Result was, that Two Automobiles and an Ice Wagon ran into him

from behind, spoiling his Car and Killing the Cautious Young Man.

Morals:

This Fable teaches Us, The More Haste The Less Speed, and Delays Are Dangerous.

CAROLYN WELLS.



AUGURY

AT morn we wept: "Farewell for aye!"
And parted. Ere the sun had set,
Again, upon the well-known way,
Lo! face to face we met.

We smiled. The skies, so long o'ercast, Were bright with promise; bravely, then, "We part no more!" we cried, and passed, Never to meet again!

WILLIAM YOUNG.



HER WARNING

MY dear," said the solicitous mother-pig to one of her family, "if you don't stop thinking so much and root more, you will never make a hog of yourself."

TWO BACHELORS

By G. B. Burgin

INNER was over at Bulton Towers, and the admiral and his friend sat taking their ease at dessert. They had been friends for years -no one knew exactly why; perhaps they did not know the reason themselves. The dreaminess of the man of letters interested the admiral, who was emphatically the man of action; and he, by mere force of contrast, was the secret hero of the man of letters. This mutual, though carefully concealed, admiration did not prevent the two friends from telling each other home They had already exchanged several of these brusque passages over the dinner-table, and, after the removal of the cloth, were in an equally belligerent mood.

"Don't tell me," said Admiral Sir John Murgatroyd, glaring at his friend.

"Pass the port, please; I wasn't telling you anything," said Mr. Arthur Carruthers Penntop-Payne.

"Then, what the—the dickens do you mean by it?" roared the admiral.

"I don't mean anything," mildly remarked Mr. Penntop-Payne.

"That's the worst of a fellow like you," the admiral declared, ferociously attacking the port. "A man like you never does mean anything."

"Why should he?" interrupted Mr. Penntop-Payne, as the admiral motioned him to ring for another bottle. It is so common to mean things!"

"Common!" The admiral's voice would have drowned the roar of a "Common!" typhoon.

'Yes, common," placidly repeated

the other; "every one marries."
"Ev—! Oh!" The admiral was almost speechless. Then he tried sarcasm. "I suppose every one is born,

every one dies; and that you were born, and that you will have to die!"

"I'm afraid so. I'd rather be trans-

lated, though."

"That's the worst of you author fellows; you're always thinking of your confounded books."

"Oh, no, I wasn't; I was thinking of Elijah-or Elisha-the chap who went up to heaven in a chariot of fire."

"I don't think you will go upward," retorted the admiral, with deep meaning. He was so pleased with his own joke that he had some more port. Why do you think I asked you down to Bulton Towers?"

"To—to swear at me?" somewhat timidly queried the other.

The admiral was ashamed. "Have I been swearing at you—much?"

"Oh, pretty much as usual." Mr. Penntop-Payne produced a neat little "No, there's nothing note-book. novel," he declared, after running his eye over a page full of characteristically neat entries. "Same old commonplace expletives; nothing fresh."

"Well, I'm-surprised." The admiral was aghast. Then he "gave

sorrow words.

"So am I," said Mr. Penntop-Payne, adding the admiral's last effort to his list. "I had heard that your swearing was original; but I must admit that so far I've been disappointed. It's mere Ratcliffe Highway. There's no originality nowadays. What was it you were saying just now, when I ventured to ring for some more port?"

"Oh, I think you ought to get

married."

"What for?"

"What for? Because, sir, it is the duty of every Englishman to get married at this crisis in our country's history. We are spreading all over South Africa."

"Well, what's that got to do with my getting married?" not unreasona-

bly asked Mr. Penntop-Payne.

"What's—! I only supposed that if you married it might some day help us to spread," delicately replied the admiral.

"Oh, I see. Very well; I don't mind. Who's the lady? I suppose it is a duty I owe to literature to get married."

The admiral relaxed. "I'm only bullying you for your good," he said,

apologetically.

"It is the mission of our friends to make us thoroughly miserable in providing for our happiness. Last time I was here you insisted on my proposing to Miss Salterby, and then you made me break it off."

"Of course I did. She kicked my dog because she nearly fell over it. If she'd nearly fallen over you after you were married she might have kicked you; and I wasn't going to let you in for that. You'd have wanted to kick me, just to get even."

"Thanks. You're as thoughtful as the steward who provides a basin after he has lured one on board the Channel boat. Does the lady you have in

your mind's eye kick dogs?"

"She! Don't you dare to be impertinent! She's the dearest, sweetest woman in the world."

"Then why don't you marry her?"

"I don't feel worthy of her."

Mr. Penntop-Payne bowed to his host. "That's the prettiest compliment I've ever had paid to me. You think I am?"

"Coxcomb!"

"Ah, I knew it wouldn't last," murmured Mr. Penntop-Payne. "You do spoil things so, admiral."

The admiral growled. "I never get any thanks for all the good I try to

đo"

"It is 'trying.'"

"What do you mean by that? If I were at sea—"

"So you are, admiral; but I don't mind. Who is the lady?"

"Miss Primula Patterne!"

"Phew! I've met her."

"She is coming over to-night after dinner, with her cousin, Lady Coningsby, who is an old friend of mine."

"So she is of mine. They're com-

ing to-night?"

"Yes, to-night. I asked them over to listen to my nightingales."

"Suppose they don't sing?—the

nightingales, I mean."

"I'll have them turned off the place. I'd like to see my nightingales not sing when they're expected to do so."

"Oh, very well. Let me see. I've met Miss Patterne several times. Fair

hair, hasn't she?"

"No; black as your hat."

"And rather deep voice. Don't like deep voices in women."

"Most musical voice I ever heard,"

growled the admiral.

"Ah, yes; she's one of those women who always want to read things aloud to one. Now, I hate having people read to me."

"You always did hate everything

that was for your good."

"And her hands—what sort of hands has she? I'm very particular about hands."

"She has perfect hands—and mouth," added the admiral, as if he

were describing a horse.

"Oh, yes; I remember now. But she has a mole on her right hand, and I particularly detest that sort of thing; it's so affected."

The admiral arose in his fury. "If you go on like this," he said, "I shall

forget myself as a host."

"My dear admiral, you've already forgotten yourself. You ask me to eat a dinner and expect me to swallow a bride. Very well; I'll swallow her, if you'll manage it all for me."

"Swal—! Oh, this is too much! But I hear carriage-wheels on the drive." He rang the bell for the butler. "Thompson, go down to the copse and see if those damned nightingales are getting ready to sing."

"Yes, sir," said Thompson, who had

followed the admiral from his last command; "and if so be they ain't, sir?"

"Turn 'em off the place the first thing to-morrow morning," said the admiral. "Come along, Penntop-Payne, and help me to receive the ladies."

Penntop-Payne drew him back, nervously. "Mind, you're to propose to her for me. You go on with her, and I'll take care of the cousin. She's only a cousin by marriage and a good deal younger—a charming woman.

"Daren't even go into action," said the admiral, scornfully. "What d' you

call yourself?"

"Oh, I leave that to you; you do most of the calling. How long has Lady Coningsby been a widow?"

But the admiral had already reached the door, and, with old-fashioned courtesy, was welcoming his guests in the hall. Penntop-Payne languidly followed, although conscious of a thrill of excitement at meeting Lady Coningsby again. He had seen a great deal of her in Rome last year, when she was nursing her moribund husband; it suddealy occurred to him that he would like to take up the intimacy again, now that there was no exacting husband requiring her constant attention. He looked at his handsome, middle-aged face in a mirror, and noticed with satisfaction that his tie was particularly well done. Then he followed the admiral, and was received with gentle coldness by Miss Patterne.

"Now," said the admiral, beaming with satisfaction, "if you won't have any coffee, we'll go and hunt up those

infernal nightingales."

II

REGARDLESS of etiquette, the admiral escorted Miss Patterne toward the nightingale copse, while Penntop-Payne followed slowly behind with Lady Coningsby, who sentimentally regarded him in the moonlight and scarcely concealed her pleasure at seeing the handsome author again; both

of them, as a matter of fact, were utterly oblivious of the admiral's refractory nightingales. The admiral, tall, athletic, well preserved, could not help thinking that Miss Patterne was thrown away on that effeminate coxcomb, Penntop-Payne. He made up his mind, as he looked at Miss Patterne in the moonlight, that he would forswear port in future and worship her instead. He had concocted this scheme of matrimony for his friend under the influence of port; and now he began to wish that he had not done so. Any man who tried to arrange another's love-affairs was bound to get into difficulties. He knew perfectly well that he did not shine as a diplomatist, and was conscious of the absurdity of his mission. What business had he to meddle in so dangerous and delicate a matter! The whole thing was an out-

rage!

Miss Patterne—the ground was rough—took the admiral's arm, and seemed to derive great pleasure from doing so. She had seen him very often lately, and, though he was at least twelve years her senior, his strong, matter-of-fact, vigorous way of regarding the world and all that was in it filled her with satisfaction; she herself was dreamy and sentimental, with a great admiration for strength. Owing to an early disappointment she had never married, and had just passed her fortieth birthday. When a lady passes her fortieth birthday and has never married, it is easy to predict that she will either marry within a twelvemonth or become a confirmed old Now, Miss Patterne had not the slightest wish to become a confirmed old maid; such a proceeding seemed harsh to the opposite sex. Added to this were the softening influence of the moonlight, the lovely old oaks under which they walked, and an occasional trill in the distance which betokened that the nightingales were getting ready to obey the admiral's She began to wish that command. the admiral would walk by her side forever and subdue his quarter-deck voice to whispers meant for her alone.

The admiral also was moved by these preliminary strains of the nightingales. "I'm deuced glad Thompson routed 'em up a bit," he said, with satisfaction. "What's the good of having birds on the estate if they won't sing when they're wanted to? They played me that trick last week. I'd have clapped them in irons if I could have got hold of them."

Miss Patterne looked up at the admiral in the moonlight; the admiral looked down at Miss Patterne. "Ah, you're such a strong man, admiral!" sighed the lady. "You always get everything to do what you wish. Even the nightingales sing at your

command."

"I wish I did get—" The admiral stopped short, in confusion. "There are some things a man never can get. Look at that fellow, Penntop-Payne, behind us! He always gets all he wants, without any trouble."

"Does he?" inquired Miss Patterne, in surprise. "What do you mean? He is a very successful man; but he always seems to me to be singularly

unhappy."

Here was the admiral's chance. "You see," he said, with an affectation of sentimentality which sat rather oddly on his strong features, "the poor chap's never married; and a man without a wife is like—is like a ship sailing through what our parson calls 'rudderless chaos!"

"Yes," said Miss Patterne, absently, "I suppose he is, although I don't quite understand the simile. By the way, admiral, you have never married,

either."

"No, I haven't," said the admiral, hastily. "Never seem to have had time."

"But now you are on the retired list," suggested the lady. "You have so nobly fulfilled your duty to your country in so many ways, admiral, that I, a woman, scarcely like to suggest the only neglect to do so on your part."

"By Jove! It never occurred to me," said the admiral, stopping and rubbing his forehead in his perplexity. "Of course, my dear lady, you are always right." Then he remembered his mission. "But, you see, I promised Penntop-Payne to find him a wife."

"Why?" asked Miss Patterne. She let the others pass them. "Most men generally have trouble enough over

their own love-affairs."

"I don't know." The admiral stopped again, then moved on a few steps. "It never occurred to me in that light when I promised——"

"What did you promise?" inquired Miss Patterne, as she caught up with

him.

The admiral again put her hand within his arm. "My dear lady," he said, almost paternally, "Penntop-Payne is the best fellow in the world, and wants a wife."

Miss Patterne withdrew her hand from the admiral's arm. "I should have thought," she said, coldly, "that if Mr. Penntop-Payne wanted a wife he would not have the slightest difficulty in finding one."

"I think he's afraid."

"Couldn't he advertise in the *Times*, when all other means failed? If report speaks truly, he can always advertise himself."

"Ah, but you don't know what shy beggars these author fellows are," declared the admiral, returning to the charge. "They're terrible on paper—make love by pages and pages; but in real life they always ask a man of action to fight their battles for them." Then he stopped abruptly, and Miss Patterne, who was rather shrewd, at once drew her own conclusions. She determined to astonish the admiral.

"He has been seeing something of you lately," said the admiral, fumbling for a move in the right direction.

"Who has?"

"Penntop-Payne."

"Oh, Mr. Penntop-Payne! Yes, I believe he has," said the lady, absently. "One always sees him posing in a corner at places. But I don't think he took very much interest in me."

"Oh, yes, he did. We've been talking about you all dinner-time."

"Well, what did you say?" inquired Miss Patterne, with all a wo-

man's curiosity.

The admiral was an essentially truthful man, and it would have been a little difficult for him to repeat all that had passed between himself and Penntop-Payne. "Oh, well, we talked about you," he said, vaguely.

"Yes?" Miss Patterne evinced a little more eagerness than she had hitherto displayed. "What about

me?"

"Oh, we talked about-"

"Yes?"

"Your—your—hair," said the ad-

miral; "he said it was fair."

"I thought authors were observant men. I am not a vain woman, but I

pride myself on my dark hair."

"Yes; I don't know how he came to make such an absurd mistake," cheerfully admitted the admiral. "From hair we got to voices, and I said how much I liked yours."

"And what did he say? You must know, admiral, that I am rather touchy about my voice and hands."

"We got to your hands afterward."

"Yes?"

"Oh, he said that he—he said that you had a mole on your hand." The admiral felt that this was hardly satisfactory, but what could he do?

Miss Patterne put up a very pretty hand in the moonlight. "Do you object to moles, admiral?" she said,

rather acidly.

The admiral so far forgot himself as to kiss the mole on Miss Patterne's hand. Miss Patterne blushed in the

moonlight.

"I think moles are adorable," said the admiral, with nautical directness. "Your hands themselves are more than enough to bring one to your feet."

A nightingale began to sing in the distance. Some new feeling took possession of the admiral, and he motioned Miss Patterne to stay where

they were.

There was a laughing light in Miss Patterne's beautiful eyes as she turned around and confronted the admiral. "Well?" she said, with a di-

rectness which was strongly opposed to her accustomed languor. "You have something on your mind, admiral. If we are to continue dear friends——"

"Dear friends! Yes, that's it," said the admiral, hastily. "We've always been the dearest friends in the

world, haven't we?"

"We have." Miss Patterne put rather a strong emphasis on the "have". "And now, admiral, I wish to know what it is you have on your mind. Two gentlemen do not discuss a lady at dinner unless they have some object in doing so. What is it?"

"What is it?" The admiral pre-

varicated.

"Yes, what is it? Don't hesitate. I know all your little tricks of speech and ways of thought; you cannot deceive me. You are much too gallant a man to attempt to deceive a poor, helpless woman."

"By Jove, yes; so I am! You are the last woman in the world I should wish to deceive," said the admiral,

fervently.

"That being so, perhaps you will have the goodness to tell me why you and Mr. Penntop-Payne were discussing my—my points at dinner."

"Your points!"

"Yes," said Miss Patterne, a little

bitterly; "my points!"

The admiral began to feel very guilty. He had committed the meanness of discussing Miss Patterne's personal appearance with Mr. Penntop-Payne, and Miss Patterne was very properly indignant.

"We both owe you an apology," he said, somewhat lamely. "It is needless to tell you that I have never spoken of you but with the highest ad-

miration and—and respect."

Miss Patterne's lips quivered for a moment. "And this—this author?" She stopped suddenly. "Now, admiral, tell me what it is all about. Does the man wish to marry me?"

"Yes." The admiral blurted out

the bald fact. "He does."

"Who put such a preposterous idea into his head?"

"I—I did," humbly confessed the admiral.

"You!" There was an accent of deeply wounded feeling in Miss Patterne's voice—an accent which was a revelation to the admiral.

"Yes. I see now that I was a bigger fool than usual ever to have thought of

such a thing."

"And you are commissioned to do Mr. Penntop-Payne's wooing for him?" asked Miss Patterne, turning as if to

go back to the house.

"I was," said the admiral; "but I renounce that commission entirely. We both owe you an apology for conduct unbecoming gentlemen, and if you'll only forgive me——"

"If I forgive you?" Miss Patterne smiled through the tears which had begun to fall; "if I forgive you, admiral, what will you do?"

"Whatever you like," said the ad-

miral.

"Then never speak to me of the subject again. Mr. Penntop-Payne is the last man in the world I would marry. It is bad enough to have to read his books. It would be worse to have to read him for the rest of my life."

"What sort of man would you care to marry?" asked the admiral,

eagerly.

"He must be brave, strong and distinguished-looking," said Miss Patterne, carefully checking off the admiral's points. "He must have served his country like a hero, and he must have a deep and abiding reverence for women, although he has never married. Do you know of any one like that, admiral?"

"Wish I did," said the admiral, ruefully. A light suddenly dawned upon him, but he was the most modest of men. He was not, in his own estimation, a hero; but he had always shown a deep and abiding reverence for women. "If it's no use talking about Penntop-Payne," he said; "shall we go on and listen to those infernal nightingales?"

"It is of no use mentioning his name to me," said Miss Patterne, with decision. "No, I don't think I care to hear the nightingales to-night, thank you; they seem to be singing out of tune!" She turned back toward the house, and the admiral followed.

"Miss Patterne!" he said, huskily.

"Yes, admiral?"

"I have done all I could for the other fellow, haven't I?"

"Ye-es."

"And the matter is ended forever?"
"The matter is ended forever."

"Then, will you do me the honor to be my wife?"

Her great eyes blazed up at his in the moonlight. "Are you asking me

out of pity?"

"Pity! No, certainly not. Having to ask you for that other fellow has made me realize that I love you myself. If you can put up with such a battered old hulk and teach me how to live, that is all I ask; and it is a great deal more than I deserve. Can you? Will you?"

"I—I will; I can," faltered Miss Patterne, putting her hand—the one with the mole on it—within the admiral's. "And now, let us go and listen to those delightful nightingales."

"Confound the mightingales!" roared the admiral. "I'd rather listen to your sweet voice than all the sickly nightingales in the world. If they dare to interrupt us when we're married, I'll have them all turned off the place." Then he halted, in dismay. "What on earth am I to say to Penntop-Payne?"

"I don't think you need say anything. They've forgotten all about us and are evidently making love to each other under pretense of listening

to the nightingales."

"But he asked me to propose to you for him."

"Very well! You did so. I refused him and have accepted you. Nothing can be clearer."

"Nothing—except having to explain it to him," said the admiral. "He mightn't think it quite so clear."

"Oh, I don't fancy he'll need any explanation. Authors have short memories, and he has probably for-

gotten all about us by this time. You know, Lady Coningsby saw a great deal of him in Rome last year."

"But why did he wish to marry

you?" queried the admiral.

Miss Patterne began to laugh. expect you bullied him into it, admiral."

"By George, I expect I did," said the admiral. Then they joined the others, who looked greatly annoyed at the intrusion and declared that the nightingales were not doing their

After his guests had gone the admiral took Penntop-Payne into the library and faced him like a man and

a sea-dog.

"Have you forgotten all that dashed nonsense I talked to you to-night about marrying?" he asked Penntop-Payne, as the latter mixed himself a soda-andbrandy.

"Forgotten! No, I—haven't," said Penntop-Payne, rather avoiding his friend's eye. "You were so imperative that I-

"What?"

"Proposed to Lady Coningsby, and she's accepted me."

"You have!"

"Yes. Why not? You surely weren't in earnest about that rubbish with regard to Miss Patterne?"

"I was, though. Fortunately, she

wouldn't listen to it."

Penntop-Payne dropped his tumbler with a crash. "Good heavens, admiral, you don't mean you----"

"Oh, yes, I did!" The admiral somewhat maliciously enjoyed the situation.

"Of course she's accepted me?" Penntop-Payne said, in agony.

"No, she hasn't."

"And what then?"

"Oh, then I proposed to her myself." The admiral mixed himself a stiff brandy-and-soda.

"And she rejected you! Poor old chap! You're getting a bit past this kind of thing, admiral."

"Rejected me? Not a bit of it!" The admiral drank his brandy-and-

soda with manifest relish.

Penntop-Payne strode to the fireplace with a dismayed whistle. "Don't look so infernally pleased with yourself, admiral. Do you know what will happen?"

Yes; we shall all get married."

"There's no doubt about that. But the first time there's 'a little rift within the lute' the ladies will exchange confidences, and my wife will be sure to hear all about this proposal."

"My wife," said the admiral, indignantly, "is much too true a woman to talk about so sacred a matter with

another woman."

"That shows how little you know of women."

"Oh, we shall see," said the admiral,

joyously.

"That's the worst of it. We shall!" said Penntop-Payne; and he crawled sadly off to bed.

SUITABLE MATCH

PSEUDO big chief of the Sioux Sued hard for the hand of sweet Sue; He carried the day, And the marriage, they say, Of Sue and the Sioux will ensue.



NEWS

LARA—Did you know that I was going to marry Charlie? MAUD—Why, no; all I heard was that you were engaged to him.

THE HEART'S DESIRE

By Madison Cawein

GOD made her body out of foam and flowers, And for her hair the dawn and midnight blent; Then called two planets from their heavenly towers, And in her face, divinely eloquent, Gave them a firmament.

God made her heart of rosy ice and fire,
Of snow and flame, that freezes while it burns;
And of a star-beam and a moth's desire
He shaped her soul, toward which my longing turns,
And all my dreaming yearns.

So is my life a prisoner unto passion, Enslaved of her who gives nor sign, nor word; So in the lovely cage her sweet looks fashion Is love endungeoned, like some golden bird That sings but is not heard.

Could it but once convince her with beseeching!

But once compel her as the sun the South!

Could it but once, fond arms around her reaching,

Upon the red carnation of her mouth

Dew its eternal drouth!

Then might I rise victorious over sadness,
O'er fate and change, and, with but little care,
Torched by the glory of that moment's gladness,
Breast the black mountain of my life's despair;
And die, or do and dare.



LIFE SEEMS SADDER NOW

So Scraps and his wife have buried the hatchet at last, eh?"
"Yes, poor things! They seem to feel their bereavement most keenly."

ADDITIONAL PROOF

COBWIGGER—I know a fellow who wrote a popular novel and made one hundred thousand dollars out of it. I thought you said literature didn't pay?

Penfield—Neither it does.

"ONE TOUCH OF NATURE"

By Edward S. Van Zile

HE was so heartily weary of it all! Often, during the triumphant years following the historic furor that she had created as a débutante the small hours had found her physically exhausted by the strain that is part of the price paid by a woman, in these mad days, for social success. "There is no royal road to pleasure," she had reflected again and again, after she had dismissed her maid and sat waiting in her boudoir for sleep to tempt her toward her bedroom. But heretofore there had been nothing of protest in her musings, nothing of revolt against the exactions made by what the work-a-day world erroneously calls a life of leisure. At two o'clock in the morning she had felt, many a time, a bodily lassitude that was not wholly unpleasant, a physical depression that had been frequently accompanied by great mental exhilaration. After her marriage, even more than before it, there had been keen delight in recalling, in the silence and privacy of her lonely apartments, the social victories that the day's campaign had vouchsafed to The tribute to her beauty that a man had paid by word or glance, the homage to her leadership that a woman had reluctantly displayed, a whisper of admiration caught from the throng, an invitation extended to her that offered a promise of further triumphs; these had been among the mental confections on which her mind had been wont to feast in the small hours.

But to-night, to her amazement and disquietude, she had found that

she was not merely weary in body, but depressed in spirit. She had caught a glimpse of a gleaming planet in the Winter sky, as she had rolled homeward at the end of the first half of the cotillion, and, somehow, there had flashed into her soul a revelation that was both hideous and fascinating. The cosmic method of comparison had of a sudden conflicted with her perfect egotism, and the steady, mocking glare of that remote, glowing world — Jupiter or Saturn or Venus, or some other planetary marvel — had seemed to bring to her reluctant comprehension the astounding pettiness and insignificance of her own achievements, hopes, fears, ambitions, aspirations, regrets. Then she had laughed aloud, drawing back from the window of the coupé and readjusting her operaabout her shoulders. would start a new fad! What the inner circle needed to regain its sanity and poise was a novel point of view. The study of astronomy would restore society to a more reasonable attitude toward the cosmos. How ludicrous it was for a few lucky people to imagine that the centre of gravity of the universe was to be found this morning at Sherry's! Ash Wednesday was at hand. She would give a series of illustrated astronomical lectures in her drawing-room presently, as a kind of Lenten antidote to the abnormal egotism of metropolitan society.

As she sat, en négligé, beside a table covered with novels and magazines, outstretched in graceful relaxation upon a reclining chair, she smiled

wearily at the absurd fancies that a fleeting glimpse of stellar splendor had begotten. She wondered vaguely if her husband had returned from his club. What would he think of her quixotic plan to restore society to a less self-satisfied, self-assertive frame of mind? She could recall the time when he had not been indifferent to her mental vagaries, unsympathetic, remote; when such fancies as had come to her to-night would have awakened his keenest interest. despite many mental and temperamental affinities, they had drifted apart; well-mated, so far as the world could see, but living separate existences that came together only on the surface. If they had had children, would it not have all been very different? He had longed, she knew, for fatherhood, and there had been times when she had felt a vague misgiving, a faint suspicion that she had sacrificed their truest happiness upon the altar of ambition. does not the nursery render the kind of social supremacy that she had won an impossibility? Surely.

Of what avail were these morbid musings? She would read for a while, and then sleep until ten. A day of great activity confronted her, for Lent was close at hand. Presently, to her mingled surprise and satisfaction, she found herself absorbed in a magazine story, a homely tale told in the dialect of the New England fisher-folk, a patois that came to her like the echo of a Summer breeze playing across a tumbling sea. With delicate art the writer had awakened her interest at the outset in the woman who sat at midnight beside the cradle of her sick child, listening for the footsteps of a belated fisherman. Would the baby live until her husband's return? Would he ever come back to her? Since sunset the storm had raged, and even now the winds were growing wilder as the breathing of the child waxed louder, and the sea and the sick one tossed ever more restlessly upon their respective beds. The mother prayed, more reproachfully than pleadingly, that God would not take them both from her, her child and her man; would not abandon her in this the hour of her sorest need.

The very simplicity of the motif, threadbare from its long literary service, had saved it from failure in the hands of a master craftsman. ment of suspense had been well maintained. Here sat a mondaine, sated with the luxuries and triumphs of an exalted social career, but with her vanity still unsatisfied, following with utter self-forgetfulness the struggle of a humble woman's soul to find God in the darkness of despair, to discover a gleam of hope in the blackness of impending doom. There was no hysteria, no striving after lurid effects in this realistic tale of human love and sorrow. The simple remedies that were the fisherwoman's only weapons in her fight against death for the possession of her child, the howling of the wind outside the cottage, the broken words of supplication and endearment that fell from her white lips, the baby's flushed face, with the tousled yellow hair against the rumpled pillow, the mother's straining eyes as she turned them from the bed to gaze at the outer door, while she listened for a heavy tread that should overcome the raucous uproar of the tempest-all these the reader saw and heard, forgetful, for the moment, of aught else but the great, universal mother-love stirred within her world-weary soul.

And when he came—the fisherman saved from the perils of the deep—came with cheer and hope in his bronzed face and husky voice, and the child, roused by his presence, looked up at him and smiled, the crisis of the fever safely passed, there were tears in eyes that the world, despite their beauty, had called cold; new lines of softness around a mouth that, with all its voluptuous symmetry, had been growing hard of late.

She closed the magazine and replaced it by the night-lamp upon the table beside her. There had come a flush to her wan cheeks, and her eyes

were no longer heavy from lack of sleep. For a time she sat there, gazing dreamily at the shadows that haunted the hangings at the further end of the Presently she arose, brushing the hair, that her maid had released, back from her forehead with a hand that trembled slightly. She stood for a moment before a full-length mirror, rejoicing in the beauty of the picture "The child had its that it framed. mother's face." A half-mocking smile came to her lips as she recalled those words of the tale that she had read, but there was no mockery in her eyes as they met her own gaze in the glass.

Turning from the mirror she crossed the room hurriedly toward the hall door, as one who doubted her own stability of purpose. The hall, dimly lighted, seemed to check her steps for a moment as she stood motionless upon the threshold of her room, gazing into its shadow-filled depths. She could hear the ticking of a tall clock, the strange sighs and creakings that always beset a great house in the darker hours. Then, quickly, noiselessly, one slender hand pressed against her throbbing heart, she sped down the corridor and rapped gently at her husband's door.

"Arthur!"

His voice came to her through the darkness:

"Elinor! What is it? Are you---?"

"I am very lonely, Arthur," she murmured, her arms about his neck, her lips close to his. Then she drew away from him for a moment.

"I have been reading a story, Arthur. It is a wonderful bit of work. I want your opinion of it."

"What? now? to-night?" he asked, a note of amazement echoing through

his voice.

"No, my dear; not to-night; to-morrow will do," she replied. But again her arms wreathed his neck, and gently, tenderly, her lips sought his.



A TOAST AFTER VADE

N ARCISSUS of these later days, I am an arch self-lover; But wine-cup and not stream displays The beauties I discover.

And watching e'er the color rare
That's given to my complexion,
I dote so on my features there
I swallow the reflection!

THOMAS WALSH.



AMPLE CAUSE FOR THANKSGIVING

MRS. KIDDER—Well, Uncle Grimm, for what are you especially thankful to-day?

UNCLE GRIMM—I am thankful that little Theodosia ain't twins and little Stuyvesant ain't triplets!

EN FAMILLE

"Where are the Summer girls now?"

THE Summer girls are back in town, From Bangor to Oshkosh;
Fair Kathryne's dainty arms so brown Are helping mother wash.
And debonair Lucille, who wore Some stones as big as panels,
Is back in her department store,
Dispensing Canton flannels.

And gentle Jane and Claribel,
Teresa and Irene,
Nina, Ethel and Estelle—
All girls of gracious mien,
Who turned down foreign noblemen (?)
And titled royal fighters—
Are getting each five dollars per
For pounding on type-writers.

And Tessie Penhyn-Astor-Brooks,
Who was of royal stock,
Is canvassing subscription-books
On "How to Darn a Sock";
And paste-bejeweled Genevieve,
Who said she snubbed a rich lord,
No longer hears the billows heave—
She's working at her switch-board!

F. P. PITZER.



A KIND HEART

MRS. VON BLUMER—My dear, you didn't tell me you had such a pretty type-writer.

Von Blumer—I didn't want to hurt your feelings.



LOUD

H USBAND—Have I got to wear those socks you got for me? WIFE—But they're beautiful. Look at the clocks. "Yes; alarm-clocks!"

THE STORY OF THREE PEOPLE

By Owen Oliver

A MORAL is useless unless you can point it at somebody. I have never been able to apply the moral of this story; so I write it down for others to try.

There were three people in it, and they were all friends of mine. There might have been a fourth, but he was wise. Wisdom is a painful virtue to

possess.

The first person was George Travers, a handsome, well-groomed fellow, who made money and friends; kindly, clever and a trifle flighty; a man's man and a woman's man, too—that was George. Of these three people he was the worst, if you will, and I liked him best.

The second person was Margaret Travers, wife of George, a woman of societies and affairs; blonde, full-blown, and beautiful; a man's edge to her intellect and a woman's edge to her tongue—that was Margaret. She was the second best of them, and I liked her second best.

The third person was Violet Dering, a tall, dark girl with eyes; good to look at, but not good-looking; a woman who wrote poems and read people—that was Violet. She was the best of them; and I liked her least.

They could all speak for themselves, and they spoke to me freely, keeping back no more than men and women always do. Possibly, the moral is in what they left unspoken; but I can only tell you what they said. I come in merely as the chorus.

George spoke to me first. It was a chill morning in April, and I was nursing a long-standing cold before the fire. He did not ask me about it, but flung his hat on the table and himself in a chair.

"I've come to a stiff place, old man," he said.

I got out the decanter, pushed over the cigar-box, and held my peace. I am the one who was wise.

"Probably," he continued, "you can guess?"

"Yes."

"You are surprised?"

"No."

"My wife—I have never spoken to any one about her before——"

"Your wife is a good woman."

"Too good!"
"For you?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "You

can say what you please about me."
"I am not likely to say anything against you." Our friendship was more than a word.

"I won't listen to anything against-

Violet.'

"I have nothing to say against Violet. I wish she had kept out of your life."

"It wasn't life—before."

"Nonsense!"

He laid his hand on my shoulder—an unsteady hand.

"You don't think so, old man."

I stared into the fire for a long time. Men and women are men and women; and an empty heart is an empty heart.

"What right have you to—live?"

"The right of any one."

"You are not 'one."

He laughed, bitterly. "Even a married man has a heart."

"So has his wife."

He looked at me under his eyebrows. "Do you think she has?"

I stared at the fire again. "Yes, I think so." I had not pushed the opinion to demonstration. I liked my friend better than his wife.

"I wonder if she would feel it much

if—anything happened?"

"Very much."

"You don't imagine that she cares for me?"

I suppose it was my business to lie to him; but it is hard to lie to one's friends.

"She has not the consolation of caring for any one else," I said, slowly.

"She couldn't!"

"She does not permit herself the

attempt."

"Her virtues are in evidence!" He poured some whiskey out for himself. "A virtuous woman can be very trying!"

"A man can be trying without being

virtuous."

"People don't usually find me trying, do they, old man?"

I shook my head. "You're very

easy to like."

He played on the table with his

fingers. "I wonder why?"

"Because it's easy to you to like other people. You don't want to hurt anybody, George?" He shook his head. "Not even—"

"Not even her. I've been on the point of suggesting a separation, time after time; but I've thought of—what you said. She has no one else—I almost wish she had."

"She could have." He raised his eyebrows. "Man alive, don't you know what a beautiful woman she is?"

"I used to think so, years ago; when I thought that she—cared for me. We weren't suited, really; but we jogged along, somehow. I was fond of her in a way, till she changed so."

"I have seen no change in her."

"I suppose you did not notice. It was about the time that you were ill."

"No, I did not notice. Perhaps

you fancied it?"

He shook his head. "It is evident enough. She is as bored with me as I with her. You don't know what it is

to live with a woman who jars you every time you see her—hear her."

"You bore it lightly till Violet

Dering came along."

"Till I knew what I had missed! After all, I have a life to live."

"So has Violet." It was my best card.

"Without me?" It was his.

"God knows!" According to my theory a man lives his life alone; but a woman is different.

"Gods' hearts don't break!" He

got up and paced the room.

"If your hearts are china, they must suffer."

He sat down again. "Must they?"
He leaned forward toward me. "If
I ask Violet——"

"She can't give you what you want."

"I want her."

"You want her as she is—a good woman. You can't have her."

"I want her anyhow. I can't do without her."

"You can try."

"Try!" He laughed, discordantly. "Do you think we haven't tried?"

"Go away."

"I went away—and came back."

"Don't come back."

He rose and stood by the fire. "I think of her when I get up and when I lie down; when I am at work and when I am at play; when I am silent and when I am talking. I am thinking of her now. I want her—want her. Margaret doesn't want me, unless it is to talk at. She is clever at saying things that sting."

"I have never known Margaret to speak harshly to any one, unless it was

deserved."

"Violet wouldn't say things, even if I deserved them. She would let me hurt and hurt, and give me a smile at the end. Violet! Oh, there aren't any words to tell what I think of her!"

I said nothing for a long time. There

seemed nothing to say.

"It is a terrible thing," I told him at

"A terrible thing!"

"Face it."

"I have faced it."

"For Violet's sake. If you care for

"Care for her! What do you suppose I shall do?"

"I don't know."

"Neither do I," he said.

Then he went; and I sat shaking my head helplessly at the fire. I knew what he would do, unless one of the women saved him. I was not sure that Margaret could, or that Violet would.

I had been thinking for half an hour when Mrs. Travers was announced. She inquired about my cold, and told me the latest scandals. I answered in monosyllables until she stopped. Then I turned to her.

"Well, Margaret?"

"It is—my husband."

"My dearest friend."

"He, or I?"

"Of course—you." I meant him; but I did not wish to hurt her.

"I have no business to complain of him."

"No."

"You can stop me, if you choose." I stirred the fire, cautiously. "You

had better tell me, I think."

"I presume I can speak to you in confidence?"

"No one but you would ask the question." Margaret was always mistrustful. Therefore I did not wholly trust her.

"You know he does not love me."

"How should I know?"

"No She raised her eyebrows. one but you would ask the question!"

"I will not ask it."

"You know also that I-I do not wish to say it."

"I understand."

"You know, too, that he and Violet Dering—" I poked the fire almost to destruction. "I do not expect you to admit it; but you do."

"Yes," I admitted.

"You know the sort of woman that she is."

"She is a good woman."

Margaret laughed, scornfully. "I should have remembered that she is a man's woman."

"She is not mine. I suppose you can take my word, Margaret?" She nodded. "Violet is a good womana very good woman. But I do not care greatly for her."

Margaret leaned back in her chair and sighed. I did not understand the

sigh—then.

"We will say that she is a good woman," she said; "I beg your pardon —a very good woman. Her goodness is not of the kind to prevent an open scandal."

"Openness does not make the

"It is the open offense that the world judges."

"It is not a question of social de-

corum, but of-people's lives."

"The lives of people who live in

society."

"We will look at it from their point of view." She would certainly look at it from no other.

"If she goes away with him—I will put it plainly—what is the result?"

"Your husband is ruined, probably."

"And she?"

"Certainly."

She leaned a little further back in her chair and looked at me. "Do you forget-me?"

"You are safe. The social forces

will be on your side."

"People will not blame me?"

"No."

"My position and power for good will be unimpaired?"

"Yes."

She smiled, quietly. There was a pink flush in her cheeks—I had never seen her look more lovely.

"Perhaps it will be for the best!"

I sat up in my chair and gripped the

"How about—them?"

She shrugged her shoulders. have told you that I do not care for him. You cannot expect me to care for her."

"I care very much for him; I also

"For her?" Margaret's voice was

"For the honor of a good woman. She is a good woman."

"We are speaking of the future."

"I would save them from the future."

"You cannot."

"I cannot; but you—if you spoke to George? He has a sense of duty."

She looked up at me, suddenly. was dazed for a moment. She is a handsome woman, as I have said china-blue eyes and pretty, pale hair. I always admired her eyes and hair.

"Has it never occurred to you that I might wish to be free? that I have a heart? I thought you understood.

But men so easily forget——"

There was nothing to remember, really; but women exaggerate things. I might have pressed her hand, on special occasions. I think I did kiss her once or twice. I was ill, and no one thought I could recover. It was nothing but what a friend might do; and we were friends.

"I do not forget anything, Margaret. He is your husband, and my

friend."

"You She nodded, approvingly. are loyal. It will be a comfort to us to think that we were—as we have been." She touched my hand. I had never been blind to her faults; but I had liked her.

"I would stop it if I could," I per-

sisted, unsteadily.

"And I would not."

She sat upright, and I knew that argument was useless.

"Then there is nothing more to be

said."

"Nothing more at present." She rose and smoothed out her draperies. She is a woman who carries flowing robes well. "Afterward-I shall have a divorce, of course."

"Yes."

"Do you think people will say anything if I marry again?"

"Ňo."

"Whoever it is?"

"Whoever it is." She smiled once more—I had not seen her look so girlish for years. "You are above suspicion, Margaret."

You know that I have done my duty by him," she said. "Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, Margaret." Then she went.

The room always seemed bare when Margaret was gone; but this afternoon it was empty. It was not she that I missed, but my idea of her. The lover of an ideal is more to be pitied than any one except the ideal.

"Two of my little tin gods have come off their pedestals to-day," I told myself. "I will go and uncrown the other!" So I went to Violet

Dering.

"I have something unpleasant to discuss," I told her, bluntly. She faced me, bravely.

"We need not discuss it unpleasant-

ly," she said.
"It is about George Travers."

"Of course."

"You know he does not love his wife."

"You know she does not love him."

"He loves you."

"And I love him." Her eyes met mine, unflinchingly.

"It is not right—you know it is not

right, Violet."

Some things are neither right nor

wrong; only unalterable."

"But the thing that you can alter you know what I mean, Violet? what it will come to—you can prevent it." She laughed, softly.

"Do you remember the Ripple Song?

Where my lover calls I go-Shame it were to treat him coldly!

That is how I feel about it. is too much for him to ask of me.'

"The ripple ran red afterward."

"I am brave enough to give him my life."

"It were braver to refuse it. Think what it means to you!"

"You can leave me out of the question."

"Do what is best for him."

She laid her hand gently on my arm. "So do I. "You love him," she said. Let us think what is best for him. Think!"

I thought. "He would lose his career, his position, his friends. What can you give him?"

She smiled. "Love!"

"Love," I echoed, absently. I could measure the other things; but not this.

"Love," she repeated. "Think! He loses less than I. A man can recover himself. No, don't speak yet. His life is so empty! His talents—you know how great they are—are stunted for the want of—love! She has been a drag on him—I don't say it is her fault; but she has—I shall do him a service if I free him from her."

"I will not listen to anything against her," I said, sharply. "She is a good

woman."

"Good—for you." Violet's eyes flashed with sudden light. "You need not be afraid; I shall not tell any one. She is not good for him."

"Are you?"

She drew a deep breath. "While he thinks so," she said. "If he alters, I can go."

"If you went now, he would get

over it."

"The ache would soon dull; not so soon as you think, but it would. Only, he wouldn't be the same man. He would shrink—I want to make him great—to see him grow, if only for a few years. It doesn't matter what becomes of me."

"I have known you since you were a child, Violet. I beg of you—if I thought that prayer were any use, I would pray of you—let him go."

"He can go when he wishes."

"He cannot wish."

"Then—" a wonderful light came into her eyes—"if he cannot do without me, he shall have me."

"Have you counted the cost?"
"All I have to give, all—all!"

"You know it is wrong."

"If it is best for him, I will do wrong."

"You don't want to do wrong,

She sobbed, tearlessly. "All my life I have prayed to do right."

"Then I do not understand—

"No," she rose with one hand on her chair, "you do not understand. It is *love!* Go, please go!"

Nov. 1902

I took her hand and raised it to my lips. "Whatever happens, Violet," I said, "God bless you."

"God bless you," she said, "because

you love him."

When I have doubted my deserts most I have been glad to know that Violet blessed me.

They went away the next day. I met Strange at the club, and he told me.

"It is a pity," he reflected, "messing up his life like that. He ought to have had more sense; but when a girl gets hold of a fellow—poor old Travers!"

I agreed with him.

Going home, I met Mrs. Gooding, and she stopped me. She was tearful, poor old thing!

"I can't talk about it," she said.
"Travers and Violet Dering! Such a dear girl! He ought to be ashamed of himself."

I agreed with her.

In the afternoon I tried vainly to

evade Mrs. Sharp.

"I see that you know all about it," she said. "Of course, Mrs. Travers will get a divorce. Nobody can blame her. Such an excellent woman!"

I agreed with her also and took ref-

uge at my sister's.

"I'm sick of hearing about it," I groaned. "Don't say a word, Lucy."

She nodded and went on with her reading for nearly a minute. Then she looked up.

"I suppose Mrs. Travers will get a

divorce," she said.

"I don't mind," I said, testily.

Lucy shrugged her shoulders. "If you don't mind," she said, "she will marry you."

I did mind. So I went abroad, and Mrs. Travers married Barton, the banker, instead. It would enlarge her sphere of philanthropic work, she wrote, and Providence had been very kind to her.

When I was at Rome I met George and Violet. They had been married for some time, and were still ridiculously in love with each other. Providence, they told me, had given the fulness of life to them.

Therefore it appears that Providence has no moral to point at any of the three. I am glad for their sakes,

since, as I said, they were all my friends; but it seems an unjust dispensation that the inconvenience of two years' exile should have fallen on me—who kept carefully out of the whole affair!

S

NOT UNDERSTANDING

BECAUSE you do not understand, I open all my heart to you;
Tell all the things I hope to do,
And all the dreams my heart has planned.
With eyes serene you wisely nod—
Because you do not understand.

Because you do not understand,
I tell you of my love and hate,
My sorrow and my fear of fate;
That which I crave and know is banned.
You smile with wise, unseeing eyes—
Because you do not understand.

Because you do not understand,
I tell you of my grief and care.
It adds no jot to what you bear;
You are too simply, singly planned.
I ease my whole sick soul to you—
Because—you cannot understand!

ETHEL WATTS MUMFORD.



AS USUAL

HUSBAND—Where do you want to go?
WIFE—Oh, I don't know—anywhere where I can spend money.
"But I thought you wanted a change?"



A COMMON CASE

"I believe she is." Are they married?"

THE PERFECTING OF HARTMAN

By Harold Eyre

N one of the Americanized hotels which have invaded London, the artist and his manager sat at breakfast. It was the morning after the farewell recital prior to their departure for the United States.

In accordance with his invariable custom, the manager was reading the criticisms in the morning papers. Mr. Baldwin knew nothing whatever of music, and, although in most things a man of common sense, he regarded musical critics with profound respect.

Presently he looked up with a perplexed face. "Listen to this," he said,

from the Times."

"Don't trouble to read it," interposed the artist. "I can imagine just what the Times has to say about me; it has said it before."

The manager laid down his paper. "I cannot understand," he remarked, with emphasis, "why you are so indifferent to the attitude of the critics."

"Because their attitude doesn't interest me."

"Doesn't interest you!" repeated the manager, scornfully; "the idea of a musician not being interested in his press-notices!"

"But I am not a musician," corrected the young man, maliciously. "Your critics say I have only a tech-

nique. Isn't that what you were going to read to me from the Times?"

"Not exactly. Baldwin hesitated. This is rather different from the ordinary criticism."

"Oh, let me hear it, by all means, if it will make you feel better."

With the air of one keeping his temper under difficulties, the manager began to read. "I'll skip the first part," he explained, parenthetically, and just give you the summing-up:

"'His final number was the abominable piano transcription of the Tannhäuser Overture, distorted with runs and arpeggios and generally butchered to make a technical holiday. Like everything else on the proholiday. Like everything else on the programme, it was applauded rapturously by

an undiscriminating audience.

"' Mr. Hartman's most sincere friends can only regret that he has elected to appeal to the public solely by his facility as a virtuoso. His programme yesterday was obviously designed to amaze the crowd by his witchery of tone, his sparkling clarity of enunciation in rapid running or staccato passages, and his immense resources of power. As a demonstration of the technical possibilities of his instrument it was magnificent—but it was not music. Real musical feeling was painfully absent.

"'All of this is matter for genuine sorrow, for, if ever there was a young man with a great piano-talent, that young man is Ernest Hartman. Were he deeply musical he would in time eclipse the memory of his illustrious master, Rubinstein, and might even hope to gain for himself a place in the history of piano-playing beside the great Liszt. But we fear that he will never do it. He certainly will not unless something comes into his life which is not there now, something that will give him a perception of the psychological secrets of his art and a sympathy with its emotional force.'

Baldwin paused. He allowed an impressive silence to intervene before

speaking again.
"Well," he inquired, at length,

"what do you think of that?"

The young man shrugged his shoulders. "Like the others, it says I play without feeling. That is noth-

ing new."
"But this goes farther," pursued the manager, thoughtfully. "It suggests that if some deep emotional experience were to come into your life---"

Hartman smiled. "You mean falling in love? That is all very well, but one cannot fall in love just because the critics advise it."

"Not solely on that account, of course," agreed Baldwin. "But what a queer fellow you are! To me, there's something almost uncanny about a young man of twenty-two who has never been in love. Didn't you ever even think you were?"

"Once, when I was twelve years

old; but not since."

"It beats me!" exclaimed the manager, in perplexity. "Surely some women attract you more than others?"

The young man's face grew thoughtful. "I don't know that I should put it in that way. Some are more interesting than others, but I don't feel at ease with any of them. No woman I ever met interested me half as much as my chemical experiments—"

He stopped and looked gravely at his manager, who had burst into a

roar of laughter.

"Excuse me, Ernest," said the latter, when he had recovered himself; "I know you're sensitive, but I can't help it. To hear you talk solemnly about chemical experiments in that connection was too much for my gravity. I don't think I was ever very romantic, even at your age, but compared with you I must have been a Don Juan. What I cannot understand is how, with your temperament, you ever came to choose music as a profession."

"I didn't choose it. They put me on a piano-stool before I could walk, and I've been there most of the time ever since. If you stick to one thing and do nothing else for twenty years or so, you can't help learning something about it, whether you're fit for it or not. And modern piano-playing is, after all, more motion than emo-

tion."

"Well," observed the manager, at length, "yours is certainly an unusual case. But, after all, any fool can fall in love. And it isn't the Romeos that make the money!"

On the first morning out Baldwin went on deck after breakfast for a constitutional. Usually he was a poor sailor, but, the sea having been exceptionally calm thus far, he had not been affected, and felt rather proud of himself in consequence.

He had made several rapid turns of the deck when a feminine voice called his name. Baldwin stopped short and perceived a lady ensconced in a deck-chair. She had large, dark eyes and black hair, and was protected from the wind by a steamer rug whose

"Do you know that you have passed four times without seeing me?" she inquired, reproachfully. "I wonder if your health would suffer very much if you were to interrupt your walk for a few moments and apologize?"

dominant shade was a becoming red.

She motioned him into an empty

chair at her side.

"This is a surprise!" he exclaimed. "I had no idea you were on board."

"Then you didn't read the passenger-

list very carefully."

"I can hardly realize it is you," continued Baldwin. "Why, it must be five years since I saw you last."

"Hush!" she said; "don't speak of time in that reckless way. Tell me about yourself. I hear the world is treating you well nowadays."

"Oh, I can't complain."

"You must find it a great relief to have only one artist to look after, instead of a whole comic-opera troupe."

Baldwin smiled. "Of course it is less trouble—but the other had its

compensations."

"Do you remember the time the company was stranded at that place out West?"

"It was at Quincy, Illinois," remarked Baldwin, reminiscently, "and Christmas week, too! I shall never forget the way we got back to Chicago. It was the only time I ever knew railroad people to act like human beings. But it would never

have happened then if you hadn't bewitched that old fellow. By Jove, what a stunning creature you were!"
"Were!" Her look of indignation

was almost real. "Have I changed

so much?"

"Not in appearance," he answered, deliberately studying her face. "In fact, you are more attractive than ever. Your beauty has ripened, if I may use the expression. But there is a change, though it's hard to explain. I think I'm a bit afraid of you now. I used not to be."

"Oh, I'm quite harmless, I assure you. But I really couldn't help growing a little older, you know. And it would never have done for me to remain always the guileless young thing I was in those days. But to return to your affairs, I hear you are to make a triumphant tour of the States. Mr. Hartman has never visited America before, has he?"

"No; this is his first trip."

"Tell me something about your protégé. Is he as impressionable as most musical celebrities, and does he give you much trouble with his loveaffairs?"

"Not half trouble enough. That's the mischief of it. I'm afraid that if the musical critics in America take their cue from their brethren on the other side of the pond, our tour will be a fizzle. You know the critical verdict means much more in the United States than it does in Europe."

"I don't understand. What has all that to do with his love-affairs?"

"Just this—the English and Continental critics say that Hartman's playing lacks emotional force, and that before it can be really effective something will have to come into his life which is not there now—that he must fall in love and have his heart broken. or something of the kind."

"You don't mean to tell me that he

has never been in love?"

"I am sure of it. What is more, I do not think he ever will be."

"How remarkable! You must introduce me to this unique example of your sex. I have never met one like that. What does he look like?"

"Here he comes," said Baldwin, as a young man's head appeared at the companionway. "I will present him, and you can judge for yourself. nest!" he called, as the young man approached; "I want you to meet Miss Reeves, whose tour I had the honor of managing the last time I was in Amer-You are both musicians, and should know each other."

After a few platitudes à trois, the manager resumed his walk and left the

two together.

That evening Baldwin again found himself alone with Miss Reeves.

"Well, what do you think of the

invulnerable one?" he inquired.

"He is charming. For one thing, he doesn't seem quite at ease with a woman, which, in a young man nowadays, is refreshingly novel. Another interesting thing about him is the fact that he has great emotional possibilities. Oh, you needn't smile in that superior way. Let me tell you, my friend, that you are completely mistaken in your diagnosis."

"If you knew him as well as I

do-" he began.

"Tut, tut! What does a man know about such matters! Any woman of average intelligence can find out more about a man's character and possibilities in two minutes than his best man friend will discover in a lifetime. Why, the boy is full of suppressed sentiment; in fact, I would almost say that he is one of the few who are capable of a grande passion. He gives me a delightful sense of being near a volcano. It is all dormant as yet, but one of these days he will meet the right woman—who, by the way, will probably be also the wrong woman and then you will have trouble on your hands.''

"I don't agree with you," said Bald-"Ernest is now twenty-two. Any young man who is normal falls in love and out again at least seventeen times before reaching that age."

"I did not say he is normal. No man can be who passes his life glued

to a piano-stool. He is not normal, and he has never met a woman who understood his peculiar temperament—or who could make him think she did, which is almost the same thing."

"How well you appear to understand him!" exclaimed Baldwin. "You convince me in spite of myself. I didn't think he had an atom of senti-

ment in his composition."

He paused, reflectively. "Helen," he exclaimed, "why don't you"—he hesitated—"why don't you take him in hand?"

She smiled, comprehendingly.

"It would be interesting," she said, thoughtfully. "Playing with fire has always had a fascination for me, especially when the fire is one that smolders. And he's really quite handsome, though not as tall as I like a man to be. But I am afraid he would take things too seriously. He is not the kind of fellow that would fall in love comfortably—and I should not like to make him suffer, you know."

"That is just what he requires," said the manager, brutally. "The whole trouble with him is that he has never learned to feel, and that is something which, in popular language, he needs in his business. The critics say it is the one thing he lacks to make his playing perfect. Just think of how much you would be doing for the cause

of art!"

She laughed. "Even if I tried, I am not at all sure that I could succeed; but I will think it over."

"Do you know," said Miss Reeves, with reproach in her voice, "that it really looked as if you were trying to avoid me yesterday?"

"You are right," answered Hartman, gravely; "that is just what I

was doing."

She smiled at the unexpected ingenuousness of the reply, then assumed a look of wounded pride.

"What have I done to offend you?"

she demanded.

"Oh, nothing, of course; that was not the reason."

"What, then?"

He hesitated. "It is hard to explain. I had a strange feeling about you. I felt that it would not do for me to see too much of you."

He stopped in some confusion.

"This is getting interesting. Please go on. Why would it not do?"

"Because—because I have never met a woman like you before. You have a disquieting effect upon me. I think you would unsettle my mind and take my thoughts from my work. That is something I wish to guard against. I have never had a woman's influence in my life, and I do not wish to begin now."

She smiled again. There was something essentially boyish in his declara-

tion of independence.

After a prolonged pause, she spoke. "You have been frank, and I will be frank, too. Do you know what is happening to you? You have been asleep all your life, and are just awakening. It is not I who have a disquieting effect upon you; it is the emotional part of your nature beginning to assert itself for the first time. And do you actually think this will hurt your music? Really, you are a very short-sighted young man. Why, you ought to go down on your knees and thank heaven that you are at last about to emerge from your cocoon! Now, if you will help me out of this chair, I shall go below to my room and leave you to think it over."

"Please don't go!" he pleaded. "I wish to talk to you."

"But I might unsettle your mind."

"I don't care, now, if you do," he answered, recklessly. "In fact, I am beginning to think I should rather like it."

She looked at him through half-

closed eyes.

"I think," she remarked, "that you are getting on nicely."

On Friday evening the usual concert was given for the benefit of the Seamen's Orphanage. The saloon was filled with passengers, eager, as passengers generally are, for anything in the shape of diversion.

Helen Reeves sat between Hartman and his manager, and commented freely on the items of the programme.

There were the inevitable preliminary remarks by an energetic person who had constituted himself advance-agent and stage-manager of the performance. Then came, in somewhat faltering succession, a melodramatic recitation by a young woman trembling all over from stage-fright, and some moth-eaten humorous stories by a raw-boned English clergyman with a shiny nose.

"Will somebody please inform me," whispered Miss Reeves, as the ecclesiastic resumed his seat amid a ripple of perfunctory laughter, "why clergymen insist upon trying to tell funny stories? Why do they wish to be

humorists?"

"For the same reason, doubtless, that low comedians yearn to play

Hamlet," suggested Baldwin.

"It's all very mysterious," observed Miss Reeves; "but what have we here?" A lady had seated herself at the piano in the self-immolating manner of the accompanist, and a baldheaded little man arose with a sheet of music in his hand. "I didn't know Mr. Weldon could sing."

"He can't!" said Baldwin, decisively. "I heard him at rehearsal this afternoon, and it sounded like a

broken phonograph."

Miss Reeves laughed. "You are quite witty this evening. But what makes Mr. Hartman so subdued? He has scarcely spoken, and he looks worried. Surely he does not suffer from stage-fright?"

"Not as a rule," said Hartman, gravely, "but I do feel a little nervous to-night. Perhaps," he added, in a lower tone, "it is at the idea of playing

before you."

"That should inspire you," she returned, smiling. "Remember, I expect a great deal of you, and I am very curious to see how you behave at the piano. Have you many mannerisms?"

Hartman laughed. "The critics accuse me of not having enough. They complain that I am stolid."

"That is much better than going to the other extreme. I should not like to see you smirk and make faces at us, as so many others do."

When his name had been announced with a rhetorical flourish by the chairman, Hartman picked his way through the audience and seated himself at the keyboard. Simply, and without any of the invocatory chords or arpeggios in which our modern virtuosi indulge,

he began to play.

It was Chopin's study in C sharp minor, known as the "'cello" study, that enigmatical composition whose meaning has puzzled the musical analysts. Demanding no unusual technical skill or brilliancy of execution, it is in no sense of the word a "show piece." Moreover, it was familiar to the majority of those who listened, for, alas! like almost everything that Chopin wrote, it has fallen a victim to the school-girl and is vivisected daily in a million back-parlors.

But, as Hartman played, the study acquired a new significance, apparent even to the prosaic Baldwin. "Gad!" muttered the latter under his breath, "something has happened to him!

He isn't the same at all!"

Baldwin was right. Hartman was changed. His old manner of appearing to toy with the resources of a boundless technique had vanished. In its stead was something new to him, something infinitely tender and moving. The haunting melody of the left hand was no longer a clever imitation of the violoncello, nor merely a demonstration of exquisite tonal effects. It was the voice of a human soul in the stress of a mighty passion, torn by alternate hopes and fears, crying out in rebellion at fate and finally beating its wings against the bars of unutterable despair.

When the closing passage had melted away into the softest of pianissimo, there was an interval of silence. Then the applause rang out in a frenzy of enthusiasm. Hartman sat motionless, his hands on his knees. He appeared to have forgotten his surroundings. Presently he turned his

head and his eyes met those of some one in the audience. It seemed to bring him to a realization of where he was. Bowing to the repeated salvos, but refusing to respond to the demand for an encore, he returned to his seat.

As he did so, he was struck by Miss Reeves's appearance. Her face was flushed, her eyes, unusually bright, glistened as if she were about to cry.

"Please take me out of this," she murmured; "I—I want a little air."

Without speaking, he escorted her from the saloon and up the companionway. The promenade deck was quite deserted; presumably, everybody was below. For a few moments the pair stood by the rail in silence, watching the sea as it rocked in the moonlight. Suddenly, she turned toward him and grasped both his hands in hers.

"It was wonderful," she exclaimed, "wonderful! I never knew the piano

could express so much."

"Nor did I," he said, "until you taught me."

"Until I taught you?"

"Yes, you." His voice was very tender as he uttered the words. "I don't know how to put it into words, but I must tell you. It is such a short time that I have known you only a few days—yet you have changed my whole existence. Everything is different. Do you remember telling me that I had been asleep all my life and was just about to awaken? Now I know how true that was. I am like one born blind, who suddenly gains his sight. The whole world seems new to me; I am beginning to discover how much beauty there is in it. blue sky and the clouds and the sunset, the waves of the sea, they all speak to me now, where before they were Ah, how And my music! can I begin to tell you how much more that means to me-since I learned to love you!"

She turned her face toward his. Her eyes still shone, but a look of pleasant excitement had replaced the tears, and there was complete self-

possession in her smile.

"Do you really love me?" she asked.

"More than my life!" he answered

"More than my life!" he answered, passionately. "Tell me if I may hope."

"You take my breath away," she said. "Who would have thought you had so much emotion! It is you quiet men—"

"Don't torture me with suspense," he pleaded. "Give me an answer;

tell me if you care for me."

"What is a woman to do," she demanded, "with a young man so impatient? I think you are most unfair to tell me this at a time when your music has left me in an emotional and irresponsible mood. You are taking me at a disadvantage—and a woman never likes to be taken at a disadvantage. Do you know that I ought to be very angry with you?"

But she smiled as she said it, and her face was dangerously close to his. She made the faintest show of resistance when he took her in his arms and kissed her reverently on the lips.

Hartman passed the next day in a curious mental state. He kept telling himself that he ought to be supremely happy. Happy he was in a certain feverish way, but with an undercurrent of uneasiness, of vague disquietude. What had happened the night before seemed like a part of a dream. There was a mistiness, an air of unreality about it all, that made the retrospect appear a whim of his imagination. Miss Reeves he saw not at all during the day. Her maid reported that she was confined to her room with a headache.

Shortly after daybreak the following morning, the steamer reached quarantine. Much virtuous early-rising ensued, with the usual bustle and excitement of preparing to disembark. Passengers appeared who had not been seen at table since the day of sailing. There was profuse admiration for the sunrise and much patriotic enthusiasm at the sight of Staten Island.

Miss Reeves did not emerge from her stateroom until the vessel was swinging into dock in the North River. She greeted Hartman somewhat formally and busied herself in giving directions about her packages to a steward.

As the steamer was being manœuvred into place, Hartman stood by her side. The usual crowd of welcoming friends were waving hats, umbrellas and handkerchiefs, and shouting salutations.

"Why have you kept away from me?" asked Hartman, in a low voice.

"If you knew---"

He stopped short. She was smiling and waving her handkerchief at some one on the dock. Following her glance, Hartman saw a portly man with iron-gray hair. The man kissed his hand and called out something that was lost in the general din.

"Is that your father?" inquired

Hartman.

"My father? How absurd! It is Mr. De Wolfe, my husband. Gracious, don't look at me in that tragic way. He is very jealous and will be wondering."

"Your husband!" gasped Hartnan. "I—I don't understand. I

thought you were Miss-"

"Oh, I always travel under my professional name; it's more convenient. My dear boy," she added, in a kinder tone, "I didn't mean to hurt you, but you mustn't take things so seriously. Everybody flirts a little on board a ship. One has to do something to pass the time."

On the evening announced for Hartman's first appearance in America, Carnegie Hall was crowded with that section of the New York public which is always ready to greet a musical artist with a European reputation and a competent press-agent.

At half-past eight, fifteen minutes

after the time set for the first number, the audience began to show signs of impatience. At a quarter to nine the impatience was general and emphatic. At five minutes after nine a man appeared on the platform and stated, somewhat nervously, that Mr. Hartman had been taken suddenly ill and could not appear; money would be refunded at the box-office.

The audience departed, some grumbling, some sympathetic, the majority with the philosophic good humor of an American gathering.

At breakfast next morning Mr. De Wolfe looked up from his Herald with a sudden exclamation. "Here's something about that piano-playing fizzle," he remarked to his wife. "No wonder we didn't hear any music last night!"

"What was the matter?"

"It seems," returned Mr. De Wolfe, deliberately, "that just before the hour fixed for his appearance the manager found the musician at their hotel—with a bullet through his head. The young fool had killed himself."

Helen De Wolfe turned white. "Killed himself!" she repeated. "Oh, it's too horrible! It can't be true!"

"Of course," added Mr. De Wolfe, contemptuously, "there was a woman in the case. The paper suggests that it was one who came over on the same steamer and made a fool of him." He eyed his wife in sudden suspicion. "Did you—did you see anything of the kind going on?"

She returned his gaze with eyes that did not falter. "No, indeed! the poor boy was so shy, he seemed almost afraid to speak to us."

There was a pause.

"I wonder," she said, musingly, "who the woman could have been?"

3

WORSE STILL

THE BACHELOR—Have you ever walked in your sleep?
THE BENEDICK—No, but I've often walked in the baby's sleep.

IN AN OLD ROSE GARDEN

IN leafy setting of the purest green Here grow my roses, sparkling with the sheen Of early dew upon each petal fair, And here and there the sunshine in between.

Bashful and coy, and seeking, in the shade, The amorous sun's first kisses to evade, A group of yellow buds their leaves unfold, Like the bright golden hair of some young maid.

Love-scented, sweet, and sensuous with the taste Of Summer slumber, saffron-hued, and graced With dainty petal, perfect to the core, Blooms Dijon's Glory, undefiled and chaste.

Here some gay beauty in a robe of gold In solemn state her regal court doth hold, Full-blown and wanton, with prolific waste Shedding her petals, like a tale that's told.

See, where the wall is green with moss grown o'er, Through the half-hidden, time-discolored door, A tender wild rose timidly has crept, And makes the garden sweeter than before.

Here boughs of budding briar interlace, Crowding the crumbling lichen-covered space; Sweetness is all around; but, all too soon, Withers like morning mist, and leaves no trace.

Here, where the roses blush a deeper red, The crimson petals all around are shed; Their life is short, though sweet, like some fair face That laughs for love in life, and smiles when dead.

Make ye the most of Summer, ye whose noon Lasts but the waning of a single moon; Guard well your life of gaily passing hours That springs to life in May, and dies in June!

St. John Hamund.



HYPOCRISY is moral versatility.

A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT

By Robert Bloom

OVE went hard with Walters. It proved fatal. He married the girl he was to love throughout eternity, and found that eternity is not eternal. He could see the end plainly, and he did not like it. Walters was fond of his sensations, and he had a way of getting them in print that was paying.

He had been in love many times, professionally, just to see how it went and to make a good story of it. He had never meant to allow it to become real, but somehow Alice Graham got the better of him—and then she got the

worst.

He wrote such beautiful sonnets and rondeaus about her blue eyes and golden hair, while Love was still in swaddling-clothes. Now, the swaddling-clothes in Walters's house were no longer metaphorical, and there was no time for inspiration. Besides, the light of heaven in the blue eyes was becoming dimmed by shadows of earth, and the golden hair in curlpapers did not fill the poet's heart with ecstatic imaginings of beauty's immortality.

After the first appearance of the curl-papers at breakfast, he had thoughts of writing something called "The Revelations of Beauty;" but he was not naturally satirical and proceeded no further than the title.

At last Walters saw that life is not all poetry, and he decided to drop to prose. The fall was great, and he had a hard bump; but it opened his eyes to what life really is.

It happened in this way: Walters decided to write a novel. Being fresh at the work, he thought he must know

what he was writing about. He must feel things, not imagine them. He would write a story of domestic love and happiness—one of those things that charm the world by their simplicity and faithful portrayal of everyday life.

But to do this he must re-fall in love with his wife and live over the first days of their marriage. His memory was not good enough to make the picture life-size, without bringing it nearer. The background of golden hopes and brilliant promises was somewhat faded, but with a little touching up it would do.

The main figures—the bright, young wife and the adoring husband—presented difficulties. Walters thought he saw a way of bringing it all back. He remembered that he began to love Alice Graham when that other man was so devoted to her. He had been madly jealous, and after that had come the catastrophe.

A jealous husband would add spice to his novel, and then there would be such a happy reconciliation after the

explanation!

The success of his novel demanded a rival for his wife's affection. The mere thought of it made the perfunctory kiss before dinner seem rather pleasanter than usual. He wavered, but his feelings were not at the proper pitch to satisfy the reading public.

Their table-talk that evening was almost lively. Walters dragged his

man into the conversation.

"I have been thinking of asking Tom Hallet to come down for a week or so. You remember him, don't you?"

Her face lighted up, as she said she

recalled him well. She was picturing to herself the handsome, clever man she had given up for Robert Walters. She looked across the table, and vaguely wondered why.

"I expect to be busy," Walters went on, uneasily, "and you will have to see

that Hallet has a good time."

Alice looked surprised, but she knew better than to ask him why he invited people when he could not entertain them. She began, unconsciously, to play her part.

"I am so glad my new riding-habit looks well," she said. "I know Mr. Hallet likes to ride, and I can show him the country around here."

Walters disappeared to write his invitation, but he could not make it

sound cordial.

He remembered now that Alice did look well in her riding-habit. He had not thought of it before.

Hallet came, and, so far as feelings went, Walters thought his novel would be a success. But he could not get down to writing. His story of domestic love and happiness was becoming impossible.

Alice was certainly following his instructions. She was seeing that his

guest had a good time.

Hallet had such a delightful visit that the week he was to stay lengthened indefinitely. Walters shut himself up in his study; then he came out and walked miles. Alice made excuses for him to Hallet on the plea of work, and devoted herself to entertaining the guest.

Walters watched them start off on their horses each morning, and ground his teeth. Alice was really remarkably good-looking—she was prettier than ever before, but she was overdo-

ing things.

She need not smile that way at the big, handsome man at her side. She might have the grace to look a little bored while performing the duties of hostess.

Then Walters thought of his book. "Remember the explanation and reconciliation," he said to himself. "This is really just what I wanted, but I don't seem to enjoy it. That book will be wonderful."

One morning Alice and the handsome man rode away.

Walters found a note on his desk, and that was all the literature that ever appeared on the subject.

He discovered that men do not write

their own tragedies.



INSTINCT TO CONSCIENCE

YOU, in an accidental Aryan shape,
With Roman training, prove a modern thing;
I, who derive from savage and from ape,
Tread on your reasoning!

You speak of necessary laws, the same
In every clime and age, laws bad or good;
I put your modern sophistries to shame
With elemental blood.

VICTOR PLARR.

6200

RATHER!

Is her husband well off?"
"I should think he is. He has more money than she knows what to do with."

A LUSTRUM OF FIDELITY

By Edith Bigelow

"I am resolved to . look young till forty, and then slip out of the world with the first wrinkle, and the reputation of fiveand-twenty.'

T FEEL disgracefully young tonight," said Mrs. Mainwaring. You look young," answered Miles Luttrell.

"Ah, pink shades! When men tell you that you look young, it's one of the sure signs that you're nearly forty."

"What are the other signs?"

"Nice boys ask you out to dine! And that is so pleasant that you don't

mind being old."

The "nice boy" looked across the small table with a brilliant, happy smile. He was at the stage when the lightest word from the beloved woman held him captive; when, indeed, her mere silence enchained him.

"I'm not a boy, you know," he said.

"You forget that I'm thirty."

"I wish I could forget it," said Ruby Mainwaring. Her face had changed, and the corners of her mouth drooped.

"Why do you say that?" asked Luttrell, almost coaxingly. He leaned across the narrow space between them and rested his eyes full upon her face.

"Never mind; don't let us analyze. If most of the people are gone, give me

a cigarette."

The pair were practically alone in the farthest corner of a three-room-

deep restaurant in Soho.

Luttrell looked about. "We own the place," said he, and gave his companion a cigarette. She smiled her thanks, and lighted it at the flame of the wax match, which he extended to her. She was never tired of watching her "nice boy." Every movement of his was graceful and interesting—to her.

"I like to see you smoke," said Luttrell; "you have always the air of doing something naughty, out of sheer bravado. You don't care for it much."

"It's companionable. I forget to do it when you're not with me," said Ruby Mainwaring. "Are we going anywhere to-night, Miles?"

"Do you wish to go anywhere, Ruby?"

"Home, I think," she answered.

"Yes, that's the most comfortable place I know," assented the young

They finished their cigarettes in silence.

"Are you ready?" asked Luttrell.

"Quite," said Mrs. Mainwaring.

In the hansom they were unusually Mrs. Mainwaring looked over the fur and lace of her high cloak collar at the boy's clean profile, and tried to keep the love out of her eyes. Presently, he gently possessed himself of her hand, and held it tightly until they reached Mrs. Mainwaring's house. They went up into the softly-lighted drawing-room. He helped her to lay aside her cloak, and she stood once more revealed in all her charm and prettiness. She was restless, and, instead of sitting down, stood before the

Miles moved near her and lighted a fresh cigarette. Suddenly, he turned and said, with a vehemence in surprising contrast with his former calm silence:

"It's no use, Ruby; this can't go on.

I can't live without you."

Instantly, her sensitive, ever-vary-



ing face was aflame; but she controlled herself.

"You don't live without me, dear," she said, and her voice trembled.

"Oh, I know," he answered. "We are friends, companions—all that! I'm your 'dear boy,' and you're 'very fond' of me. But it's nonsense. I'm a man, and I love you; and you've got to marry me."

Ruby gasped. "Oh, Miles!" she

cried.

"I'm not good enough for you; I haven't much to offer you, but you're kind, you like me—try to love me!

I won't live without you."

In an instant he had her in his arms, and her life was transfigured. Then she became coldly, tragically sane. She disengaged herself almost roughly from his embrace.

"I am forty," she said.
"I know it," said Miles.
"I will never marry you."
"Then you don't love me."

"I won't marry you—because I love

vou.'

Luttrell's face was white and his eyes blazed. His was the quiet of the sleeping volcano. "Sit down," he said, "and let us talk sense." Then, being a man, he went on smoking.

To some women the scent of a cigarette must always recall the most wonderful experience of their lives, because some of the dearest of men bridge

over a crisis by smoking.

Luttrell looked at Ruby for a minute in silence. There was something pathetic about her: her beauty, hardly yet touched by the early frost; her gentle air of having tried against heavy odds to be happy, and of having only partially succeeded; and the wholly touching expression which seemed to say, "Love me! I am worth it, and yet I have had so little love!"

As Luttrell looked at her, he appeared to be ten years her senior. "Now, my child," he said, gently, "give me your reasons—your foolish, foolish reasons."

"There is only one thing that keeps us apart—my age," she said.

"In all the happiest marriages—"

began Miles.

"Yes, I know," she answered. "I've been trying to think that, but it isn't true." Then she broke out vehemently: "Oh, Miles, think of the agony! Think of the constant daily effort to keep young! Why, the very wear and tear of that would make a woman old! Think of going down to breakfast and feeling that a man was noticing, in spite of himself, how faded, how plain, his wife was growing!"

Miles had stopped smoking. He took her hand. "You talk," he said, "as if I loved only your body, Ruby."

"Oh, I know, you care for the real me; but my body is all you can see, and that is forty years old!"

"What is it you're afraid of?" he asked, presently; "that I'll stop loving

you?"

"Of that—of everything! I haven't the courage! What would people say?"

Luttrell's face hardened a little. "Do you care for that?" he asked.

"Yes; I can't help it; and so would you, in time. Think of always having to explain your wife! It would wear you out."

He was silent for a moment; he had dropped her hand. "Ruby," he said, "you have never told me whether you loved me."

Her whole form seemed to glow and expand. She leaned toward him with a sort of celestial radiance resting upon

"Whether I love you!" she said. "Well, you have at least a right to know that! Does a prisoner love the sunlight when he feels it once more upon him? Why, you're the only man on earth who ever brought happiness into my life! You have healed all my wounds, cured all my pain. I love you from your beautiful head to your beautiful feet; the touch of your hand makes my heaven. And more than that, I love your heart, your nature, your truth, your courage and your tenderness. If to-morrow you lost everything that could make other women love you—if you were only a

poor, suffering wreck, broken in fortune and even in reputation—I would take you and cherish you and tend you for the rest of your life!"

Luttrell covered his face with his "Ah," he said, brokenly, "that is love! What have I done to deserve it?" And then he folded her once more against his heart. This

time she was unresisting.

For a few moments she rested quietly, lulled by a sense of blessedness, by the awful joy that comes to a woman with the knowledge that she is really loved. After a time she raised her face. It was pale and serious; the bright look had faded, and she had undergone one of the sudden transitions that made her charm so varying.

"Miles," she said, "I should not be afraid, if I could be sure of one thing.

"What is that, dear?" Luttrell

"If I could die in five years."

"Why do you say that?"

"I think a man who really loves a woman might love her for five years." He smiled a little. "I think it has

been done."

"Don't smile; I am serious. It is a long time to be in love. Few men and women really love each other so long."

"I shall love you always."

"Don't tempt fate! There is no such thing as 'always'—especially in love."

"Your troubles have made you distrustful. Because one man has been cruelly unworthy of you, why should all your faith be destroyed?"

"It isn't that. It is what I see, what I observe. I have watched these

unequal marriages."

"And many of them are successful. Remember the Northbrooks."

"Yes; he died in three years."

"Young Harries, then; he married a woman fifteen years older than himself, and she was no beauty, either."

"Long ago he reached the stage when he became kind to her! Oh, Miles, if you were ever kind to me, I should creep away and die!"

The expression in her eyes went to

her lover's heart.

"How blind you are, my darling!" he said, and his voice shook. "When I become kind to you—merely kind it will be I who deserve to die."

"Don't you see that it is almost more than I can believe in—this happiness? It is like the dream of a starving man. What if I wake, and find that I am hungry still? You ought not to love me, you know. You're a fine, handsome young creature, with the world

before you, while I-

"While you are a haggard, ugly, stupid old woman, you're going to say?" He was laughing now. "Why don't you see yourself as you are?" he went on; "a woman who combines in herself the charms of all ages. I can't say to you all I think; I'm not good at phrase-making; I only know that you are the one woman on earth that I wish, now and as long as I live."

"How happy we've been these last

months!" Ruby sighed.

"It has been heaven to me," said Luttrell, gravely.

"Why tempt fate, Miles? It is not

too late; let us stay as we are."

Miles appeared unmoved. He had not too high an opinion of himself, but he knew his power. He observed Ruby silently, with something like amusement in his eyes. Before his look her own eyes fell.

"I know it's impossible," she said, nervously; "but, oh, I do want to be fair to you, my own little boy! mustn't be a millstone around your

neck!"

"Come around my neck, dear!" he said. "Never mind what you call yourself."

H

THE bride and groom were of sufficient social importance to escape open adverse criticism. There was something about their obvious happiness that disarmed ridicule. ple who had known Ruby in the days of her misery, before Death's scythe had cut the knot which was throttling her, were glad to see her face so radiant. At last happiness had come her way, and nobody grudged it to her. She

was a woman who never made an enemy; she was not brilliant enough to be caustic, nor rich nor beautiful enough to be envied; and it is chiefly a sharp tongue or a large fortune which excites the enmity of one's fellow-men.

Luttrell, with his clean, manly beauty and his straight reputation, was deservedly popular. Perhaps one or two maidens heaved a fluttering sigh to see a man so desirable carried off by a middle-aged woman; but the most disappointed had no legitimate grounds for pitying him. He wore the proud and satisfied look of the man who has gained that for which he has striven, and that is the most becoming expression known to the human countenance. Ruby had cast off ten years of her age. Every one admits that love is, among other things, a fine cosmetic.

On the day when Miles and Ruby walked down the aisle, safely married, it did not occur to any one in the audience to observe the disparity in the dates of their births. It was only after they had disappeared that some one murmured: "How young she looks!

and he is quite settled."

Then began a period of time too beautiful to be written about. any one who wishes to picture it, imagine the feelings of a woman who has been crushed, bruised, neglected and insulted by one man, and who suddenly finds herself cherished, appreciated and adored by another. Very few people know anything experimentally about a real marriage, but nearly everybody with a soul above that of a caterpillar has had mental glimpses of what it might be. Such a marriage Miles and Ruby had made. Theirs was the perfect union of the physical and the intellectual. Mind and body were satisfied. Every day was golden to this man and this woman, because every day found them together. Their love did not spoil their wholesome interest in the outer world; it was rather the glowing background of life which beautified the most insignificant objects.

For five years their sky was without a cloud. People smiled, and said: "Five years is a long time to be in love with one's own wife." But it had not seemed a long time to the Luttrells. That evening in the restaurant—the evening which had decided their fate—seemed like yesterday.

On the fifth anniversary they went there again to dine. The pink candleshades seemed identical with those which long ago must have succumbed to London dirt. Even the waiters looked familiar; and the chef, if not the same as formerly, was evidently

the equal of his predecessor.

Ruby wore a black gown which displayed her still lovely arms and Miles had grown a little shoulders. heavier and was handsomer than in his over-thin boyhood. He was in the full glory of five-and-thirty, the age at which a man should be looking and doing his best. His eyes had not the eager, restless light which had been in them five years ago, for a man cannot be always searching for what he has long ago found. His face wore the contented expression of a person who, having desired certain things, has obtained them and is satisfied, not satiated. He was the picture of a happy, prosperous man, but he was still interesting—a difficult quality to preserve amidst too much happiness and prosperity.

Ruby, at forty-five, was still exceedingly attractive; but she was frankly middle-aged. She had learned to conceal her throat—where age first grips women-with velvet or a diamond She was exquisitely groomed. She wore her own hair, undyed, just showing a streak of silver here and there, and had taken sedulous care of a once lovely complexion. Indeed, she looked ten years younger than she could have done by means of massage minus happiness. She had had five years of peace of mind, the absence of which lays women low with the fashionable nervous prostration. Since the first few weeks, when she had trembled at her blessings, she had held fast to the belief in the absolute reality of Miles's love. The women who wonder all day long whether they are actually beloved are the first to be trodden on by Time; and, unfortunately, Time's feet are crows' feet.

The room was tolerably full. Miles sat facing it, while Ruby's back was

turned to the diners.

About the middle of the dinner, Miles observed: "There is the prettiest girl you ever saw, at that table."

"I can't see," said his wife, tranquilly, "without turning round."

"Wait till we go out," said Miles.

He looked often in the direction of the girl. Presently he exclaimed, softly, so that she might not hear him: "She is the incarnation of youth and Spring."

"How poetical!" said Ruby, smiling;

but she winced.

As they were leaving, she glanced at the young girl, who was really exquisite; tall and slim, but rounded, and very fair. Throat and cheeks were molded with at once a softness and a firmness, like marble made flesh. The bloomy freshness of April seemed to breathe from herself and her garments.

"Isn't she lovely?" asked Miles, as he and his wife drove away. He had caught the eyes of the fair unknown, and they were as blue as a southern

"Beautiful!" said Ruby. "I wonder who she is?"

They were soon to know, for within a week they met her. She was called Lilias Dale and was an American girl, lately arrived to spend the season in London. They saw her constantly, for she knew most of the people in their set.

From the first, Luttrell was frankly charmed with her. Dinners, dances, Ranelagh and Hurlingham brought them together. Ruby, unfortunately, was not very well that Summer, and did not always feel able to keep her numerous engagements. She would not hear of allowing Miles to stay at home with her. Her "boy," as she still called him, must not forego all his Summer pleasures for the sake of

a "tiresome old woman." When she said "old woman," Miles kissed her with all his usual fervor, and told her that pleasure lost its charm when she was absent; but he went, nevertheless.

Ruby triumphed over ill-health, and presently took her place in the festive entertainments proper to the season. She cultivated the acquaintance of Lilias Dale. She studied her, unblinded by her beauty, and came to the conclusion that the girl was as lovely in character as in face and figure. Lilias and Miles were a splendid couple. Ruby would have enjoyed looking at them, if she had not been very human, and the wife of Miles. They took the most transparent delight in each other's society.

One day Ruby overheard a friend of hers say to some one: "I feel rather sorry for those two," indicating Lilias and Miles; "they don't know yet how much they care for each other." "They will find out,"

was the reply.

Ruby went home and looked at herself in the glass. The light was brutally truthful. It had no reticence. She bared her throat, she looked at herself in mirrors cunningly adjusted to reveal every line. A great pang shot through her. She was an old woman! "Mature," a flatterer would have called her; "old," she called herself. She had never played with facts—she had had need to face them. Fifteen years spent with a man who had broken her down, body and soul, had aged her before her time.

The Indian Summer of Miles's love was the mellow prelude to the inevitable frost. Now, Winter was here. She steeled herself in anticipation of the time, surely not far distant, when Miles should become "kind." She recalled some lines by Stephen Phillips:

Thou would'st grow kind,

Most bitter to a woman who was loved. I must ensnare thee to my arms and touch Thy pity, but to hold thee to my heart.

Ensnare him? Never! There was only one dignified course for a woman who had been supplanted. Ruby re-

membered a dictum of a wise friend of hers: "When you begin to feel the necessity for holding a man, spare yourself the pains; he is already gone."

Ruby quietly took up her life after the terrible hour with the looking-

glass.

Miles seemed ill and worn. He did not sleep well. His wife heard him sometimes pacing the floor of his room.

Lilias, too, was changed. She seemed to avoid Ruby, though the elder woman was as friendly as ever and sought her society. Lilias and Luttrell seldom looked at each other now.

One day they were all talking of separating for the Summer. Dales were going to the Continent, the Luttrells to their country house, and later to Scotland. Presently, Ruby left her husband and Lilias alone. She was sorry for them; she realized that Miles was a man so loyal that he could never confess, even to himself, that he loved any woman but his wife. After all, she reflected, a man could make vows, but he could not be sure of keeping them; and love was perhaps a transient passion, which at best must survive as a crystallized habit of affection. She viewed the situation with a strange, calm detachment. Poor children! She felt like a pitying mother toward them.

After half an hour, she went back very quietly—for the first and last time an eavesdropper, one with an honorable motive—and drew aside

the portière.

Miles and Lilias stood facing each other, with their hands clasped.

Ruby was right; he had not spoken. Both faces were white, and their eyes exchanged the secret held in keeping by the tight-closed lips.

Ruby stole away. She knew what she wished to know, and her course

was plain.

That evening the Luttrells spent at home. Miles was frankly ill and out of spirits. Ruby sat beside him, holding his hand—the hand "whose touch was heaven," as she had once told him—stroking his wavy hair, where there was no tinge of gray.

She felt already so far on the journey she meant to make that the world of passion had receded, leaving only the quiet atmosphere of kindness and affection, the warmth of love without

its turbulence.

"Dear," she said, "I have been

happy for five years."

He looked at her with a far-away expression. "Have I kept my promise?" he asked.

"To the utmost."

Then, after a little: "And now I am an old woman."

"Never to me," he said.

He took her face and turned it toward him. All her love for her handsome "boy" flooded her eyes. She kissed his lips once. She could not trust herself to do more; perhaps that warm contact might hold her back from the journey she had pledged herself to take.

"My boy, my boy!" she cried; "no man ever made a woman so happy. I bless and thank you for it! And now

I am tired and will sleep."

In the morning she was still sleeping.



FORGIVING AND FORGETTING

FORGIVING and forgetting might
Be practised oft in debt,
Were lenders willing to forgive
As borrowers to forget.

S. W. GILLILAN.



THE CRIMINAL

By Arthur Macy

CRIME flourishes throughout the land,
And bids defiance to the law,
And wicked deeds on every hand
O'erwhelm our souls with awe!

I know one hardened criminal Whose maidenhood with crime begins; Who, safe behind a prison wall, Should expiate her sins.

She is a thief whene'er she smiles,
For then she steals my heart from me,
And keeps it with a maiden's wiles,
And never sets it free.

She plunders sighs from humankind, She pilfers tears I would not weep, She robs me of my peace of mind, And she purloins my sleep.

Of lawless ways she stands confessed, And is a burglar bold whene'er She finds a weakness in my breast, And slyly enters there.

A gambler she, whose arts entrance, Whose victims yield without demur; Content to play Love's game of chance And lose their hearts to her.

A graver crime is hers; for, when Her matchless beauty I admire, Of arson she is guilty then, And sets my heart on fire.

A bandit, preying on mankind, Her captives by the score increase; No hand can e'er their chains unbind, No ransom bring release.

She is a cruel murderess

Whene'er her eyes send forth a dart,
And as she holds me in duress

It stabs me to the heart.

Crime flourishes throughout the land, And bids defiance to the law, And wicked deeds on every hand O'erwhelm our souls with awe!



SEEING THE PICTURES

MRS. DEVOE (whispering)—Don't stand in front of the other people, Georgie; it's very rude.

GEORGIE (aged ten)—Well, what makes them stand so far away from the

pictures? I can't see through them!

MRS. DEVOE—S-sh! See the pretty sheep in the snow-storm.

GEORGIE (critically)—Huh! who ever heard of sheep being left out in a blizzard like that? They'd die. What's the matter with the man? Why doesn't he put them in the stable?

MRS. DEVOE (speciously)—I suppose he's overcome with the cold. Take your hands out of your pockets, dear. (Gives him catalogue.) Here, hold the

book.

GEORGIE (consulting the catalogue)—"1750: Moonlight." What's "1750?" the price?

Mrs. Devoe (absently)—No, dear; that's the year—moonlight in 1750.

See the fruit piece!

GEORGIE (reflectively)—I couldn't let the fruit stay there long enough to paint it; could you, mother? And look at the glass full of wine! Wine wouldn't be long in a glass at our house. Why didn't the artist drink it?

MRS. Devoe—Probably he didn't drink.

Georgie—That's funny! Maybe the wine was poor. It must be that, because the label's turned away. (Referring to another canvas.) "Sunset at the Brook." See the cows drinking. And, my! what a red-hot sunset! I'll bet if a bull was there he'd chase it. (A moment later.) Say, mother, why are all those people sitting down around the centre of the next room? Are they tired?

MRS. DEVOE—There are so many large paintings in there, dear; it's quite proper to look at large pictures from a distance.

GEORGIE (still curious)—And why have they steam heat right against the

backs of the seats?

MRS. DEVOE (still patient)—To keep the people from sitting there too long, dear.

GEORGIE—They ought to have a policeman to keep them moving on.

Mrs. Devoe—What a bright, happy face that newsboy has!

GEORGIE (derisively)—Huh! you never saw a newsboy with such a clean face in your life! I'm tired; let's go home.

MRS. DEVOE—Not yet, dear; it wouldn't look well; we've been here only fifteen minutes.

GEORGIE (impatiently)—Why do we have to pay to come in here, anyway? Who gets the money?

Mrs. Devoe—It's divided among the artists. We'll go into the next room

Georgie (suddenly discovering Indian study at the further end of gallery, enthusiastically)—Look, mother, look! Injuns! Come on! (Temporary separation of mother and son.)

ROY MELBOURNE CHALMERS.

LA NOBLESSE FRANÇAISE

Par le Marquis de Castellane

TE n'est pas son histoire que j'ai la prétention d'écrire. Son épopée est trop connue, le sillage qu'elle a tracé à travers le monde, depuis la Palestine, au temps des Croisés, jusqu'aux Etats-Unis, au temps de Rochambeau, est trop lumineux pour que quelques anecdotes glanées de ci de là ajoutent à son lustre. est d'ailleurs l'intérêt qu'offrirait le récit de son passé à des lecteurs américains? Quand je leur aurais appris que sept mille gentilshommes se firent tuer à Azincourt en une seule journée pour arrêter l'Anglais envahisseur, que la race des Bourbons est la plus illustre des races royales, et que madame la duchesse d'Uzès est la première des duchesses de France, la noblesse francaise grandirait-elle à leurs yeux d'une coudée? Il en est de la réputation des castes comme de celle des individus: leur ascendance les classe. Au bout d'un certain temps les individus ne s'appartiennent plus en propre; aux yeux du monde qui les juge, ils sont, bon gré mal gré, ce que leurs pères ont été, avec leurs mêmes vices et leurs mêmes vertus.

Toute différente est une étude de la noblesse française telle qu'elle est, telle qu'elle vit à l'heure actuelle. Quelle place elle occupe dans l'état. Quelle est son influence sur la marche des affaires publiques? A défaut d'influence, quelle est sa mentalité? Estce une vieille bigote, ratatinée dans une sorte de "religium tremens"? Est-ce au contraire une jeune écervelée avec des propensions à courir la prétentaine? Autant de questions qu'il est intéressant de poser, d'abord parce qu'on peut les résoudre, ensuite

parce que l'étranger apprendra par la solution qui leur sera donnée—quel est le degré de considération politique, intellectuelle et morale qu'il est en droit de lui accorder.

Ι

La noblesse moderne date de la Révolution française, c'est-à-dire de 1789. Elle a donc un peu plus de cent ans, ce qui est vraiment un âge fort peu avancé dans un pays qui aura bientôt 1600 ans d'existence; non qu'elle ait été formée alors, mais c'est alors qu'elle s'est transformée, qu'elle s'est en quelque sorte faite "peuple,' qu'elle a cessé d'être une classe privilégiée dans l'état pour y devenir un simple ornement. Jusqu'alors la noblesse avait été un ordre politique; l'antique constitution française l'avait associée à l'exercice du pouvoir; elle était un des trois points d'appui du roi de France dans l'exercice de ses droits: les deux autres s'appelaient le tiers état, c'est-à-dire le peuple proprement dit et le clergé, ce qui permet de dire que la monarchie française fut une monarchie à la fois aristocratique, nationale et cléricale.

Pourquoi la noblesse perdit son privilége, pourquoi elle fut nivelée, pourquoi tout à coup il n'y eut plus en 1789 qu'un peuple et que des citoyens exerçant des droits identiques; autant voudrait pour répondre à ces interrogations écrire l'histoire entière de la Révolution française. Qu'il nous suffise de constater le fait sans le discuter, moins encore sans l'expliquer. Mais ce qu'il importe de connaître, c'est la façon dont cette noblesse accepta sa

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dépossession, quelle fut sa participation à l'incarnation démocratique de la France, si, en un mot, elle bouda la démocratie, ou si elle lui prêta le concours de son intellectualité.

Je remarque d'abord que les deux noms qui dominent les fameux états généraux, d'où est sortie notre moderne ossature, sont deux noms de nobles. Mirabeau et Talleyrand sont sans conteste les deux chefs qui ont présidé à la transformation, entraînant par leur exemple, par la logique de leurs raisonnements, et par leurs talents, l'opinion et le vote de leurs collègues. 1789 à 1791 ils furent les deux étoiles du firmament révolutionnaire, éclairant la marche triomphale du peuple français vers la liberté. Et tous deux avaient dans les veines non-seulement du sang de gentilhomme, mais encore du sang de grands seigneurs.

En outre, il suffit d'ouvrir le compterendu des discussions parlementaires qui eurent lieu à l'assemblée constituante, pour acquérir la preuve que les grandes réformes qui, à cette époque, entrèrent dans nos mœurs et pénètrèrent ensuite les moëlles de l'Europe entière, eurent pour promoteurs des membres

de l'ordre de la noblesse.

C'est ainsi que "l'égalité" entra dans nos codes, non comme une conquête mais comme un don. Ce fut bénévolement, sans contrainte, que le comte de Clermont-Tonnerre, député de Paris, à la tête de quarante-six nobles aussi authentiques que lui-même, pénétra dans la salle où délibéraient "à part," suivant l'ancienne loi constitutionnelle, les représentants directs du peuple; s'adressant à eux il leur dit: "Nous cédons à l'impulsion de nos consciences, et nous venons travailler avec vous au grand œuvre de la régénération publique." Le grand mot était lâché: la régénération publique. Désormais il n'y aura plus ni noblesse ni tiers état! Il n'y aura que la chose publique. Et de la chose publique à la république, il n'y a pas l'épaisseur d'un cheveu!

Mais il faut que l'égalité qui s'annonce soit effective; et comme c'est la noblesse qui possède les priviléges, c'est la noblesse qui doit en être dépouillée. Elle le comprend, elle s'en dépouille elle-Jugeant le sacrifice indispensable elle va au devant de lui. la nuit du 4 août 1789, le vicomte de Noailles, le descendant d'une des plus illustres maisons de France, s'écrie: "Les communautés ont fait des dequ'ont-elles donc mandes demandé? Que les droits d'aides fussupprimés . . . que droits seigneuriaux fussent allégés ou échangés. Ces communautés voient, depuis plus de trois mois, leurs représentants s'occuper de ce que nous appelons, et de ce qui est, la chose publique; mais la chose publique leur parait être surtout la chose qu'elles désirent, et qu'elles souhaitent ardemment d'obtenir." Et, ces paroles prononcées, Noailles propose aux membres de son ordre de décider:

1—Que désormais l'impôt sera payé par tous les individus du royaume, dans la proportion de leur revenu.

2—Que toutes les charges publiques

seront supportées également.

3—Que tous les droits féodaux seront rachetables par les communautés.

4—Que les corvées seigneuriales, les mainmortes et autres servitudes personnelles, seront détruites sans rachat.

Entraîné par ce jeune homme au cœur généreux et à l'esprit ouvert, l'ordre entier de la noblesse défile à la tribune, chacun renonçant à quelque chose, s'obligeant à payer comme le premier venu, immolant sur l'autel de l'égalité des droits datant de temps immémoriaux. Exode admirable vers la démocratie de toute une classe de la société française qui avait acquis ses priviléges au prix du sang répandu par les ancêtres sur les champs de bataille du monde entier.

Cette nuit est restée célèbre dans nos annales. Je ne crois pas qu'elle ait sa similaire chez aucune nation.

Elle fut le point de départ de la formation moderne des peuples européens. Tous, tôt ou tard, Allemands ou Anglais, entreront dans le moule fondu alors. Et ce sera un Français

de vieille roche, comptant dans sa famille des ministres, des cardinaux et des maréchaux, qui, parlant au nom de sa caste et l'entraînant après lui, aura eu la gloire d'apporter à la France et à notre continent les germes prolifiques de l'égalité! Je dois à mes lecteurs de leur apprendre que c'est aux Etats-Unis que Noailles a entrevu l'auréole de libéralisme et de modernisme qui s'attache à son nom. avait été un des lieutenants de Rochambeau, lors de la guerre de l'Indépendance. A fréquenter les Américains, il avait appris ce que vaut l'individu, quel qu'il soit, dans une société bien étayée!

Sans la liberté, l'égalité n'est qu'un château de cartes; une fois nivelée la France voulut la liberté. Ce fut encore sa noblesse qui la lui octroya.

La plus précieuse de toutes, la liberté religieuse, eut pour promoteur mon aïeul, le comte de Castellane. Ce n'est pas sans une certaine fierté, je l'avoue, que j'ai reçu cet héritage. Se dire que son sang est pour quelque chose dans la disparition d'un sectarisme qui, au cours de notre histoire, avait fait couler tant de larmes, c'est constater que les titres de noblesse de sa famille ne sont pas oblitérés! Et mon aïeul eut d'autant plus de courage à proposer et à faire insérer dans la déclaration des droits de l'homme la liberté des cultes, qu'il battait ainsi en brèche la vieille formule monarchique: le trône et l'autel! Il délivrait la royauté. Celle-ci cessait d'être l'Evêque du dehors, comme on disait alors, pour devenir un simple témoin, le témoin de l'âme française obéissant à ses convictions. Tout le vieil édifice monarchico-clerical s'écrou-La colère des prêtres réduits à l'action personnelle, la stupeur des seigneurs qui avaient pris l'habitude de faire de leurs fils des évêques, dans le seul but de leur obtenir de plantureux bénéfices, n'eurent point d'égales au cours de ces célèbres discussions. se menaça; on se battit; Mirabeau-Tonneau, le frère du grand Mirabeau et son adversaire, retournant sa célèbre phrase à l'envoyé de Louis XVI.,

lorsque celui-ci vint signifier aux trois ordres de délibérer séparément, s'écria: "Nous ne sortirons d'ici qu'on ne nous en arrache, à moins qu'on n'ait déclaré que la religion catholique est la seule religion nationale; sans cela nous mourrons plutôt sur les bancs!" C'est que la motion du comte de Castellane était un écroulement. Désormais, plus de compression, plus de guerre aux philosophes ou aux Plus d'attirail céleste protestants! dans l'état! A la place, des consciences libres, un état libre, et des églises libres, comme chez vous, mes chers lecteurs! Il est vrai qu'à l'heure où je trace ces lignes les églises françaises ne sont pas complètement libérées, mais fatalement elles le seront le jour prochain où elles se sépareront volontairement d'un état dont la mauvaise humeur ne pourra être vaincue qu'à la condition de ne réclamer de lui ni aide ni sub-

Après la liberté religieuse, la liberté de la presse! C'est encore un noble, et quel noble! Le chef de la célèbre maison de la Rochefoucauld, qui en est l'initiateur! "Tout citoyen a le droit de manifester ses opinions, sous la seule condition de ne pas nuire à autrui!" Voilà la motion qu'il fait inscrire dans la déclaration des droits de l'homme. Et pour obtenir de ses collègues qu'ils la votent, il ajoute: "La presse a détruit le despotisme, c'est elle qui précédemment avait fanatisme!" détruit le Quelques mois plus tard, quelqu'un proposera de taxer la circulation des journaux. Il s'y opposera en disant: "Personne ne révoquera en doute que, de tous les commerces, celui des idées soit le plus précieux, et je crois que vous devez le favoriser de toutes les manières."

Ce fut encore un grand seigneur français, le comte de Clermont-Tonnerre, qui formula dans le premier comité constitutionnel des Etats généraux les bases de notre droit politique moderne. Il fit inscrire cet aphorisme dans nos codes: "Quand la manière de gouverner ne dérive pas de la volonté du peuple claire-

ment exprimée, il n'a pas de constitution." Et, partant de ce principe, il déclarait responsable devant la nation "tous les fonctionnaires, tous ceux qui, de près ou de loin, touchaient à l'état, sauf le roi." Le roi de France devenait un automate enchassé! Ceux qui de loin suivent nos affaires, reconnaîtront dans ce roi-là notre président de la république actuel. De Louis XVI., roi de l'assemblée constituante de 1789, à M. Loubet, président de la République Française de 1902, il n'y a qu'un pas. On n'est pas plus nouveau-jeu que ne le fut le comte de Clermont-Tonnerre!

Mais il n'a pas suffi alors à la noblesse française de codifier les droits du peuple; elle a eu d'autres gloires plus effectives: celle de doter le pays du régime financier qui le régit encore aujourd'hui, dont il a retiré cent années d'une prospérité sans seconde; et celle de créer à l'usage du pauvre une assistance d'état obligatoire, au lieu et place de la charité individuelle et facultative. C'est à deux grands seigneurs que nous devons et notre premier budget et notre premier système d'assistance. L'un, le duc de la Rochefoucauld, dont j'ai déjà parlé, créa de toutes pièces le bloc, dit des quatre contributions. A la "taille," qui était un impôt d'autant plus odieux qu'il frappait seulement le petit peuple, il substituait l'impôt "régénéré," c'està-dire égal pour tous, portant sur toutes les sources du revenu. Au cours de l'interminable discussion à laquelle donna lieu le premier budget législatif, la Rochefoucauld acheva de poser les bases d'une juste comptabilité financière dans une démocratie. En se reportant aux discours qu'il tint, au nom du comité des finances. on retrouve tous les desiderata des réformateurs actuels ajournés, grâce aux dissipations et aux guerres de nos Quant à l'assistance gouvernants. publique, ce fut le duc de Liancourt qui en traça l'ébauche. Elle est résumée tout entière dans cette motion que le 27 septembre 1791 il fit voter par les Etats généraux: "L'assistance des pauvres, dans tous les âges et dans

toutes les circonstances de la vie, est mise au rang des devoirs les plus sacrés de la nation. Ses représentants en font une charge nationale, à laquelle il sera pourvu ainsi qu'aux dépenses pour l'extinction de la mendicité sur les revenus publics dans l'étendue qui sera nécessaire."

Tous ces souvenirs sont extrêmement glorieux pour la noblesse de France. Ils prouvent qu'au début de l'ère moderne cette noblesse emboita résolument le pas à la marche en avant du pays, et que dans la lutte de celui-ci contre l'oppression elle continua à se battre avec le même courage. le même renoncement, qu'elle avait toujours montrés sur tous les champs de bataille. Aussi, lorsque la Révolution française en 1814 semble avoir dit avec la déchéance de Bonaparte son dernier mot, c'est à elle que la France abattue s'en remet du soin de la Quiconque est de bonne foi, relever. doit reconnaître que les deux hommes qui successivement alors la délivrèrent du cauchemar de l'envahissement, furent Tallevrand et le duc de Richelieu. deux gentilshommes de haute race! En 1814, comme en 1789, la noblesse est partout en tête de tous les mouémancipateurs. J'ajoute vements qu'elle a même la primauté des lettres; car Chateaubriand, un noble lui aussi! éclaire le siècle des rayons de son génie, alors que Lamartine et Musset, tous les deux gentilshommes, se préparent à y ajouter les leurs et à faire de cette union un immense éblouissement!

II

1902! Tout est changé! Les nobles ne sont nulle part, ni au pouvoir, ni à la tête de l'armée, ni à celle du mouvement politique ou intellectuel! Tout au plus demeurent-ils confinés dans les quelques châteaux qui leur restent, d'où ils se figurent exercer un prestige que nuls, sauf quelques "snobs" énamourés de particules, n'aperçoivent autour d'eux! Notre noblesse se transforme peu à peu mais sûrement en musée.

Au lieu de demeurer une modernité elle devient une antiquité! Peut-être après avoir créé le mouvement en avant, croit-elle le moment venu d'entrer "de plano" dans l'immortalité? Cette interrogation nous conduit tout naturellement à examiner quelle est sa mentalité. Recherchons-la au quadruple point de vue qui constitue la capacité gouvernmentale d'une caste: la politique, la religion, les impôts et le travail!

l'appartiens à cette noblesse; j'ai vécu toute mon existence à son contact, et ce contact ne fut souillé par aucune compromission, puisque je suis arrivé à la vie publique alors que monarchies et empires étaient déjà loin. J'affirme que depuis vingt-deux ans je n'ai pas rencontré parmi mes pairs un seul irréductible. Que la république nous assure la liberté! C'était la seule protestation. L'on n'ajoutait pas: "et nous la servirons!" mais on le pensait. Et s'il s'agissait de déférer aux instructions d'un prétendant, non-seulement on les discutait, mais encore on y désobeissait sans hésiter. Nous avons tous vu le phénomène se produire lorsque le comte de Paris, l'héritier des rois! tenta de rallier sa bonne noblesse autour du panache du général Boulanger. Celle-ci se coupa en deux; la moitié alla au panache, l'autre moitié le couvrit de pommes cuites! Comment en eut-il été autrement d'une caste où les hommes se découvrent à peine devant un prince du sang qui passe, tandis que les femmes ont complètement désappris les courbettes et jusqu'à la façon de leur faire la révérence! Donc, j'ai le droit de conclure que, tous, nous sommes imbus de républicanisme. Sans que nous nous en rendions compte peut-être, nous avons désappris l'obéissance, et si, par un coup du hasard, la monarchie nationale était rendue à la France, nous ferions de très mauvais monarchistes. La mentalité politique de la noblesse est aussi républicaine que celle du peuple. Nos pères ont créé la démocratie, nous reflétons, par un phénomène atavique et à notre insu, leur création.

En revanche, notre mentalité religieuse est en raison inverse de celle des masses. Tandis qu'elles se déchristianisent, nous nous rechristianisons. Tandis que la foule reste fidèle à deux ou trois pratiques seulement du culte catholique qui sont des marques initiales, telles que le baptême et la première communion, nous faisons volontiers, à toute heure, montre de notre foi. L'Etre suprême de 1789, inventé par un noble, le comte de Virien, est relegué au magasin des vieilles guitares, et nous nous réclamons ouvertement de Dieu et de ses saints. Qui a creusé ce fossé entre la France et la noblesse? C'est le laïcisme à haute dose introduit dans l'instruction primaire depuis vingt ans d'une part, tandis que de l'autre nous avions gardé le droit de mettre la conscience de nos enfants dans le moule de crédulité plus que de foi, fabriqué par les Jésuites. De ce droit nous avons usé, je pourrais dire abusé. Pour nous, tout homme qui n'a pas la foi et qui l'avoue, est bien près d'être une canaille. Le temps est loin où le duc de Liancourt, président des Etats généraux le 3 août 1789 levait purement et simplement la séance parce qu'un curé avait eu l'audace de proposer à l'assemblée de se déclarer catholique, apostolique et romaine." Un noble qui actuellement agirait de la sorte, serait conspué dans tous les clubs mondains. Non-seulement nous ne sommes pas des libres penseurs, mais encore nous n'entendons pas que ceux qui sont nobles comme nous pensent librement. Il y a une discipline religieuse; nous devons nous y soumettre.

En matière d'impôts l'antinomie est la même. La démocratie paysanesque et ouvrière considére que le salaire n'est que le prix du travail, sans en être la récompense, et elle réclame la participation aux bénéfices. Pour nous sa prétention est une monstruosité; nous la repoussons comme une atteinte à la propriété, et, dans la crainte que l'on impose progressivement nos immeubles, nous nous déclarons les adversaires irréductibles de la seule mesure fiscale qui puisse les dégréver, et qui s'appelle l'impôt sur le revenu. Et le peuple insiste; et nous résistons au peuple! Et la colère du peuple monte! Il nous chasse, peu à peu, de nos derniers retranchements; il s'en empare; quelques années, quelques mois encore, et il nous traitera en parias auxquels il convient de faire rendre gorge. D'une lutte fiscale, par notre entêtement nous aurons fait une lutte sociale, et, en voulant enchaîner le vent, nous aurons dechaîné la tempête. Le peuple est-il injuste lorsqu'il dit aux riches: payez à l'état ce que vous lui devez? Les nobles, il y a cent treize ans, ne le pensaient pas; ceux d'aujourd'hui n'osent pas avouer tout haut que leurs capitaux et leurs valeurs doivent être exempts de participation aux charges publiques, mais au fond ils le pensent.

Reste la question de travail! Les nobles sont-ils nés pour travailler ou pour ne rien faire? Chair de Don-Juan ou chair à canon? C'était de ce double limon que sous l'ancien régime était pétri leur personnage. Les nobles d'aujourd'hui se font de leur rôle social une autre idée. Soit intuition, soit nécessité, mais plutôt nécessité, ils commencent à glorifier le travail. Au lieu d'en faire une "diminutio capitis," ils en font une parure. Les grands initiateurs de la France moderne avaient entrevu cette inversion.

Dès 1800, le vicomte de Noailles, celui que ses renoncements dans la nuit du 4 août avaient rendu célèbre, écrivait à son fils: "La révolution qui s'est accomplie en France exclut des places et des honneurs l'ignorance et l'oisiveté . . ." Et par le fait on pourrait citer chez nous, à l'heure actuelle, plus d'un gentilhomme qui s'est fait volontairement fabriquant de vin de Champagne, planteur d'orangers, constructeur d'automobiles, le comte Florent de Castellane, le comte de Chabannes, le marquis de Dion, etc. rien faire n'est plus en honneur comme sous le roi Louis Phillippe ou sous l'empereur Napoléon III. Quand on dit d'un jeune homme ce qu'Horace disait des jeunes seigneurs romains:

Gaudet equis et aprici gramine campi, il semble qu'on lui décerne un brevet de dédain, et celui que nous appelions jadis "un gentil gigolo," est bien près aujourd'hui de se voir traité de simple imbécile.

De cette récapitulation il résulte que la mentalité de la noblesse française, à l'heure actuelle, correspond éxactement à la mentalité du peuple français sur deux points: celui de la forme républicaine et celui de l'égalité devant le travail; au contraire elle diffère du tout au tout, en ce qui concerne les sentiments religieux du pays et la participation des citoyens aux

charges publiques.

Quelle est la conséquence de cette diversité de vues? Elle vient de s'affirmer de façon tangible dans la dernière consultation électorale, et sous la forme d'une lutte au couteau entre le peuple et les hautes classes de la société, à la tête desquelles marche la noblesse. Il semble que peuple et noblesse aient livré un combat suprême et, bien entendu, c'est la noblesse qui n'étant ni le nombre ni la puissance de l'argent a mordu la pous-Pouvait-elle éviter la défaite? Je n'hésite pas à répondre oui. Je fonde mon affirmation sur ce fait que partout où elle a reconnu la justesse des revendications populaires en matière d'impôts, que partout où elle n'a pas tenté de faire de ses convictions religieuses une politique d'agression contre la libre pensée, elle a été soutenue et choisie pour le répresenter par le peuple s'inclinant sans honte devant l'accumulation des services rendus à la France par certaines familles. C'est donc sa faute si elle a perdu la bataille. Vaincue, quel est son avenir? C'est ce qui nous reste à examiner.

III

LA noblesse française a-t-elle un avenir? Les fautes qu'elle a commises sont-elles réparables? Va-t-elle petit à petit et de plus en plus couler à

l'oubli? Tous ces grands noms, qui évoquent tant de hauts faits, La Trémoille, Uzès, La Rochefoucauld, Talleyrand, Noailles, Maillé, Richelieu et bien d'autres, sont-ils destinés à s'enfoncer dans les nuages de la légende, tandis que ceux des auneurs au mètre ou des grands marchands d'épices, les Boucicault, les Dufayel, les Potin, conquerront la gloire et la renommée? En un mot, une noblesse démocratique, fondée sur les services rendus à l'état par la canelle ou par le chocolat, est-elle en train de refouler dans les lointains de l'histoire la vieille noblesse militaire desséchée et exsangue? française Tout dépendra des persistances de la scission d'idées faite actuellement entre la démocratie et nous. Prendrons-nous la tête du mouvement démocratique, ou nous laisserons-nous remorquer par lui en protestant? Dans le premier cas, les paysans français se rallieront autour de leurs chefs naturels parce qu'après tout ils sont chauvins, qu'ils aiment la gloire, qu'ils sont fiers de l'illustration de familles nées du même sol qu'eux. Dans le second cas, ils nous tireront leur révérence avec une rancune rentrée dont ils seront disposés à nous faire pâtir tôt ou tard. Et alors que deviendrons-nous?

Il n'est que trop facile de le prédire. Nous ne disparaitrons pas, parce que, comme le reste des Français, nous suivrons la loi de la nature, et que nous continuerons, quoi qu'il arrive, à faire des enfants. Mais quels enfants! Des fils et des filles qu'avant peu, une ou deux générations au plus, notre code destructeur aura prodigieusement appauvris. Car nous ne jouissons pas comme vous, mes chers lecteurs américains, de la liberté de tester. Celle-ci vous permet de faire riche, opulent, celui que vous avez choisi de préférence pour perpétuer votre nom et pour

conserver les richesses acquises. lois à nous détruisent par principe nos propres efforts, en vue de grandir le prestige du nom que nous portons. Jusqu'à ce jour la noblesse française a pu compenser, par de plantureuses alliances contractées à l'étranger, le vide fait dans ses caisses par les lois. Mais combien de temps cette possibilité durera-t-elle? Les héritières se fatigueront de ne venir en France que pour s'entendre appeler: "Madame la marquise," ou "Madame la duchesse," d'autant qu'elles n'y porteront même plus le sceptre de l'élégance mondaine, lequel avait été le monopole exclusif de leurs prédécesrices. Paris étant devenu le centre des élégances du monde entier, l'élégance par une fatalité inouie, de "nationale" qu'elle était, devenue "internationale." Le dernier des Français élégants fut le prince de Sagan, Depuis sa disparition de la scène mondaine, ce ne sont plus les Français qui font la mode et qui s'efforcent de donner le bon ton, ce sont les étrangers.

Je conclus en disant à mes pairs: Faites ce que vos aïeux ont fait il y a cent treize ans. Allez au devant des aspirations populaires. Vous ne pouvez être quelque chose dans votre pays que par le peuple, non tel que vous voudriez qu'il fut, mais tel qu'il est. Si vous allez à lui, il viendra à vous. se complaira à être l'auteur de votre grandissement, à vous octroyer de nouvelles lettres de noblesse, des lettres modernes! Celles-là, pour être moins éclatantes que celles qui vous ont été léguées, n'en seront pas moins réconfortantes. Ce seront les lettres de la paix au lieu d'être les lettres de la guerre. Nobles de France, marchez à la conquête de ces parchemins-là, ou bien renoncez à toute primauté dans votre belle patrie!



ENCOURAGING

HE—I have a feeling that before the evening is over I shall kiss you. SHE—How many times?

TO DESTINY

O DESTINY, I triumph over thee!
Lo! thou hadst sworn my sorrows should not pass,
That all my griefs should never go, alas!
But hush! a little love has come to me.

Oh, happiness walks ever at my side, Since my beloved swept my tears away; Love guards my heart through every golden day, And grief, O Destiny, has died, has died!

I had not dreamed, what time I was asleep,
That happiness could make me shed these tears;
Lo! yesterday and in the vanished years
I wept for sorrow—now for joy I weep!

Thou, Destiny, who erstwhile conquered me, Since Love is mine, shalt henceforth bend and bow And in submission serve me—even thou, Great Destiny, my humble slave shalt be!

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE.



THE UNCERTAINTY OF WOMAN

THERE was once a cat named Thomas. He had a fine mistress, who was very proud of him, and used often, in speaking to visitors, to praise his great size, his glossy coat and the grand wave of his tail.

Thomas once took a night off. Meeting some other cats, a disagreement arose and several fights ensued. Thomas was in each fight. A free-for-all followed, after which Thomas passed on. Some boys shied stones at him, and he took refuge in a stable. He was hoisted out of a window by the kick of a horse and landed in the mud.

Thomas then passed through a coal yard, and explored a gas-works, coming in contact with much coal-tar. Feeling hungry, he made a meal from the garbage-can, and, being chased by a dog, he ran, and was shot at by two policemen.

Journeying onward, Thomas finally met the largest and strongest and wickedest cat in town. Engaging him in conversation, reference was made to a certain Miss Tabby, beloved by both. Fierce jealousy possessed each, and they fought after the manner of demons for the space of twenty minutes, a multitude of people contributing missiles.

It being now morning, Thomas started homeward, where, on his arrival some hours later, hearing that his mistress had some fine company in the drawing-room, he decided to go in, to the end that she might exhibit him and praise his

great size, his glossy coat and the grand wave of his tail.

Coming out a moment later, Thomas was heard to exclaim, in a bitter

tone: "Frailty, thy name is woman!"

HAYDEN CARRUTH. .

MRS. OGILVIE

By Theodosia Garrison

"I will see when Mr. Ogilvie expects to return, sir," and shown Tressenden into the closely shuttered drawing-room. The place radiated a delightful cellar-like coldness, likewise a cellar-like darkness to eyes dazzled by the Midsummer glare without, and Tressenden stumbled over the edge of a rug and sank into a linen-draped chair with a sigh of relief. "Praise the Lord!" he said, piously, and ran his fingers through his damp hair.

The girl, who from an opposite corner of the room had watched his entrance with great interest, laughed suddenly and unrestrainedly, and Tressenden rose confusedly to his

feet.

"I beg your pardon," he said, into the darkness, "I thought I was quite alone."

The girl came toward him slowly, and to Tressenden the room seemed to brighten visibly with her approach. She was a slip of a thing in a fluttering white gown, and her dark hair was pushed childishly away from her face. There was a great amusement in her eyes as they looked into Tressenden's embarrassed countenance.

"But, monsieur is right," she said, seriously, quite as if she had followed his train of thought. "It is of a warmth to-day; never have I known such heat. This"—she designated the room with a pretty fluttering of her hands—"is the only cool place in this so-detestable house."

"I am most fortunate to be here," said Tressenden, "though, unfortunately, my stay is to be very short."

He looked at the small person with an interest not wholly untinged with admiration. How pretty she was and how dainty! and just how did she happen to be stopping at the house of Ogilvie at this ungracious time of year, when the two elderly sisters of the place were allowing their angular forms to be swept by ocean breezes at Newport, and the host had, according to his butler, departed for parts unknown?

"I have brought the plans for Mr. Ogilvie's house at Bath," he explained. "There were some alterations he wished, and we were anxious to have him see them. You can tell me, perhaps, when he will be at

home.

She sighed, plaintively. "A week or more," she said. "A long time, monsieur. It is very dull here by myself in this big house—big as a convent and not half so gay—and with only Jeanne to talk to. The days are very long, monsieur. About the bath-house," she added, politely but vaguely, "I do not understand, monsieur."

"Who in the world," thought Tressenden, "can she be?" He ran through the gamut of acquaintances hurriedly and rejected them all as impossible. "As to the house," he echoed, "it is to be a very delightful place indeed, if the old—if Mr. Ogilvie wouldn't give so much of his personal attention to it. It's to be a gift for his bride. You know, he was married in the Spring."

To his surprise, she colored, delicately. "Oh, yes, monsieur," she said, "I knew it. In fact," she laughed wickedly, "I was there—

what you call 'present.' Only a little month has he been home, and then, suddenly, he is gone again—what one might call a second marriage

journey, monsieur."

"I should have come sooner," said Tressenden, "but I have been on a bit of a trip myself; not of the same character, however! I got to town only yesterday." He put his plans in his pocket. "There's scarcely any use of my waiting for a man who has formed the habit of protracting his honeymoon;" and he laughed.

"But must you go, monsieur?" she said. She moved a step nearer, and her dark eyes looked wistfully into his. "The—the day is warm, and I am triste here alone for so many days. Would it be hard for monsieur

to stay but a little while?"

"Monsieur is only too charmed," said Tressenden, promptly. "You adorable little thing!" he added, to himself. "Have you been shut up here long?" he asked; "all this beastly weather? Haven't you been driving? The Park isn't half bad on a day like this."

She shook her head, sorrowfully. "But no, monsieur," she said; "Jeanne, she will go nowhere. Only, she sits and cries for her Paris, over and over as a cat cries, and I will not go alone. It is not good to be alone with no one who can laugh beside one. And I have been here"—she counted daintily on the tips of her fingers—"three whole weeks, monsieur."

"Do you stay much longer?" asked Tressenden, with rather an uncomfortable feeling of endeavoring to discover what he had no business to ask.

She looked at him, curiously. "But indefinitely, monsieur, of course. Oh, but it gives one the feeling of homesickness, that word!" There was a little quiver in her voice as she spoke. "Always in my mind is a picture of the convent garden, with the good sisters coming and going from the chapel, and the girls with their arms about one another's waists,

up and down the walks in the afternoons. And the apple-trees, monsieur! They were all in blossom when I left, and when the wind blew they would turn from pink to white, and from white to pink again. Always I am thinking of the appleblossoms." She paused and looked at him, wistfully. "I do not know why I tell this, when I do not even know monsieur's name. It is droll, is it not, that I make monsieur a priest, that I may tell him a little confession of the heart? And on this so hot morning, too! But, then" she laughed and there was an adorable break of dimples about her mouth—"it was monsieur who said the prayer as he entered!"

Tressenden smiled sympathetically at her bright face. He longed to comfort her as he might a pretty child, the dainty, homesick being, whom nature had apparently meant to be gay and light of heart as a bird. Just why, he wondered, was she beating her wings in this Holland-draped cage? He smiled as he answered her.

"My name is Tressenden," he said;
"Edward Tressenden, and I am
something like a sixth cousin, if
there is such a thing, of Mr. Ogilvie,
and his very good friend, although
I see him only twice a year or so.
(Which," he added, mentally, "may
explain it.) And as for the rest, I
am a poor and most embarrassingly
honest architect—all architects are.
But, really, I do not know why I
should say all this to mademoiselle,"
he quoted, "when I do not even
know mademoiselle's name."

The girl looked at him, quickly. There was a great astonishment in her eyes, and then, to Tressenden's amazement, she colored slowly from her chin to her dark hair.

"Monsieur does not know who I am?" she said. "But I thought—I understood—surely I imagined—you said you knew that Mr. Ogilvie was married, and—and I thought you knew who I was—who I am."

She paused, in smiling embarrassment at the architect's amazed face. "Good Lord!" said Tressenden for the second time that morning.

Before his mind's eyes flashed a picture of Ogilvie, dignified, ponderous, white-haired, the pink and pattern of all a middle-aged millionaire should be. He knew, of course, that he had married abroad, and he remembered hearing in some indirect way that his wife was French. But that this child, this delicate bit of flower-like youth, should be the wife—he could have laughed aloud at the absurdity. It was grotesque, it was ridiculous, it was horrible!

"Monsieur is surprised?" asked the

girl, wonderingly; "and why?"

"I beg your pardon," said Tressenden, vaguely, "but you seem so young so—really, for the moment I was confused. You see, I had no idea, none whatever, that I was addressing Mrs. Ogilvie."

The girl was certainly a creature of surprises. She stared blankly at Tressenden's face for a moment, and then, to his amazement, broke into sudden merry laughter and hid her glowing face in her small hands.

"But it is so droll, monsieur!" she said, presently. "I—I was so sure that you knew, and then to find that, after all, you guess. I am sure that it is Mr. Ogilvie will be surprised at that."

"I dare say," said Tressenden, cynically. "But why," he demanded, "aren't you with him? Isn't it rather an unusual proceeding for a man to go on his wedding trip without his bride?"

The girl shook her head, but there was the flutter of a smile on her lips. "It is strange," she said, "but I do not think—in fact, monsieur, I know—he did not wish me. Indeed," plaintively, "he made it very plain to me, monsieur."

"The brute!" thought Tressenden. No doubt the man realized his folly by now and was in no mood to picture himself a laughing-stock for the public. But to put this indignity upon her, to make her know! Tressenden's blood flamed in a righteous indignation.

"But it is not for long," the girl said.

"In a week he will be back, monsieur, and I have been promised many things. We are to go to the seaside, and there will be fêtes and dances." She clasped her hands, gleefully. "Oh, the convent will be quite forgotten, they tell me, monsieur."

"I dare say," said Tressenden. Poor child! The wretch had promised her these as he might offer a baby bonbons. To think that a marriage like this was possible anywhere outside of a French novel of the last century!

"You have never been away from your convent before?" he asked,

gently.

"Only for a little vacation," she said, measuring the duration of time prettily between her forefingers; "and then, at the last, to make ready for the wedding, monsieur."

"Have you a father?" said Tressen-

den, bluntly.

"But no, monsieur," she sighed; "many years ago, when I was a baby, he died."

"Your mother, then?" said Tressenden; "she arranged this, perhaps?"

"Yes," said the girl, simply; "as monsieur says, it was quite her arrangement, quite. To be fair, though, Mr. Ogilvie it was who urged and urged and insisted. Oh, for many years he insisted."

"It must have been when you were in the cradle," said Tressenden,

roughly.

The girl laughed. "Monsieur mistakes my age," she said. "But it is my mother who says this. As for me," blandly, "I did not see Mr. Ogilvie, never in my life, monsieur, before the day of the wedding."

"Oh, the limit!" said Tressenden,

"Oh, the limit!" said Tressenden, to himself, "the limit! He must have

been mad!"

He stretched his hand for his hat, and hesitated. This hot July morning seemed a veriest Midsummer night's dream. After all, the distant claim of cousinship gave him some right to an intimacy with this pathetic, illused, adorable child. From this time on, while he repudiated the man, he would utilize the relationship.

"Mademoiselle," he began, "I beg your pardon, Mrs. Ogilvie---"

She stopped him. "The first name, I beg you, monsieur," she said. "It—it is good to hear it again. Never do I hear it in this place except from Jeanne. If you do not mind, monsieur," wistfully.

"With all my heart," said Tressenden. "Then, mademoiselle, I was about to suggest this: As you are lonely here and as the day is so warm, and as a hard-working architect has little or nothing to do on a July day, suppose you let me take you to the Park this afternoon?"

She interrupted him with a little rapturous cry. "Monsieur is too good!" she said. "Oh, I will be glad, so glad! If only Jeanne will consent. Jeanne," she explained, "is my maid, monsieur."

"You will explain to her that I am Mr. Ogilvie's cousin," said Tressenden, "and," he smiled a bit grimly, "that accordingly I, too, am your cousin, mademoiselle. At four, then."

"At four," said mademoiselle, fervently.

Tressenden sat long before his open window that night and smoked many pipes and meditated largely. afternoon had been one to remember. Mademoiselle, having apparently a maid as pliable as Juliet's nurse, had greeted him upon the very doorstep, and they had spent together what, Tressenden suddenly realized, was the most enjoyable afternoon of his life. Mademoiselle had exclaimed, had sparkled, had enjoyed, had been with difficulty restrained from picking flowers and finding herself in the stern grasp of the law, and had given herself, heart and soul, to the feeding of squirrels. Imagine a Mrs. Ogilvie Tressenden refeeding squirrels! filled his pipe, and smiled grimly. for his venerable sixth cousin, some day, Tressenden told himself, he would have the very great pleasure of telling him to his face his opinion of this marriage. In the meantime, he would do his best to keep the poor little bride from pining herself to death in that mausoleum of a house.

Tressenden lost all knowledge of himself in the great pity he felt for her —a butterfly about to be captured, a child with a woman's tragedy staring her in the face. After all, he reflected, as he put his head on his pillow, it was none of his business, but a man hated to see a relative, even as remote as a sixth cousin, make a fool of himself. Still, even a fool had a right to be consulted concerning the depth of a rear portico to his country house. It might be as well to-morrow to stop in for a moment and inquire of James where a letter would reach his master. James had a delightful way of leaving questions to be answered by others. Yet Mrs Ogilvie would be the proper one to consult. Tressenden was a truthful man, with an adequate amount of humor, but he told himself this seriously before he fell asleep.

However, it was not in the Holland-draped room he saw her the next morning, but on the Avenue as he sped on his way to her house. She came toward him breezily, with a radiant smile of greeting, a blackgowned, small-bonneted female in attendance.

"It is all right," she explained to the latter, in rapid French; "you may go back. It is Mr. Ogilvie's nephew. He will take care of me. The house with the handkerchief tied to the door-knob. That," she explained to Tressenden, "is so we can find it easily. In this so-detestable place, all the houses are alike—until one distinguishes. You are coming to take me to feed the little beasts again, yes?" she inquired.

"I was coming to see you," said Tressenden. He suddenly lost all interest in his cousin's address. "And, of course, we will go to the Park if you wish. By the way, I have suddenly risen in the world; have I not, mademoiselle? From a sixth cousin to a nephew of Mr. Ogilvie is a dizzy elevation."

"It is all the same—in French."

said mademoiselle, and she had the

grace to blush as she laughed.

Mademoiselle fed the last nut to her squirrels, deplored with them that she had no more, and joined Tressenden in the shady, rustic Summer-house. "A shame, monsieur," she said, "that I have no more for that one." designated a small, supplicating animal in the distance. "See, he with the face of the Mother Superior, who prays and beats his breast. If one might throw him a sou now and let him buy his own! Strange that Mr. Ogilvie told me nothing of these sodear animals. Many things he told of America, but not this."

"Mr. Ogilvie is too busy with bulls

and bears," said Tressenden.

"Bulls and bears!" said mademoiselle; "I do not understand." Whereupon Tressenden explained the stock-market in words of one syllable, to mademoiselle's complete satisfaction.

"Mr. Ogilvie would have made it much clearer to you, I dare say," said Tressenden. "He is what one might well call an authority on the subject."

A little smile lighted mademoiselle's face. "But no, monsieur," she said; "never is he serious with me. It is always, 'Here are bonbons, petite,' or, 'Here is a new ring,' or maybe a necklace. Few words he says to me otherwise. One should be content,

perhaps."

"And—you are content?" said Tressenden. The question asked itself. He had not meant to touch on a matter so close to her, but, now that the words were uttered, he was conscious of a great curiosity as to the answer. She was a child, but not all a child. He had seen, with some intuitive vision in these two brief interviews, that something stronger and better lay beneath the surface lightness. "You are quite content?" he asked again.

Mademoiselle lifted her eyes to his, and then suddenly dropped them and checked the certain words on her

lips.

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"Who is, monsieur?" she said, simply. "Only, perhaps, the good sisters, and they gain heaven's peace early. Are you content, monsieur?"

"No," said Tressenden, shortly, and his heart beat a sudden alarm as

he uttered the word.

"So it is," said mademoiselle, sagely; "yet, I have always prayed for it, monsieur, and, perhaps—who knows?—someday my prayers may be answered." She turned to him suddenly, with a little laugh. "Already one has been answered, monsieur," she said; "out of my mind the little animals put it and I forget, and I am very happy. My—Mr. Ogilvie returns to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" Tressenden; said "to-morrow!" He turned his eyes from mademoiselle's face to the green expanse beyond. What right, he asked himself, savagely, had he to feel stunned by the announcement? It was quite the usual thing for a man to curtail a business trip to return to his bride, and quite correct that the bride should show a proper amount of joy at the prospect. It was none of his business, whatever. But the awful injustice of it kept calling him from somewhere. He faced mademoiselle with a strange recklessness in his

"Every dog has his day, made-oiselle," he said. "I say that not moiselle, because it is new, but because it is apt. To-morrow I go back to work, and it's going to be very hard work—much harder than you understand, and to-morrow you—well, a new sort of life will begin for you, I imagine. Suppose we two have a day of it? Let's go a-gypsying and forget for a while that there is any one in the world but ourselves. We shall lunch—" he looked where the flag of the Casino fluttered in the breeze-"and we shall amble about afterward to suit ourselves, and you will not tell me every five minutes, as you did yesterday, that it is time to go home. Well, mademoiselle?"

Her eyes caught a sudden light from his. She swept him a bit of a saucy courtesy. "I am in the hands of my sixth cousin—and Mr. Ogilvie's nephew," she said.

Mademoiselle flecked the last bit of salad aside on her plate, and laughed. "But monsieur is not gay," she said. "You have not laughed, oh, for minutes, and, when you looked long at me just now, you sighed. Why, monsieur? My story ended well; always the story of Aucassin and Nicolette ends well, and it is a pretty story, though monsieur has heard it long before."

"Not exactly as you tell it," laughed Tressenden, honestly, "and I did not mean to be sad, mademoiselle. I was thinking of another story, that had not such a satisfactory ending."

"Tell me," said mademoiselle. "I have heard other stories, though not," with a sudden justice to the place of her education, "at the convent, mon-

sieut."

Tressenden smiled. "My story is not gay, mademoiselle, and I haven't the slightest intention of ever telling it to you. It is about a fool who stumbled in love, quite without the least intention of doing it, and with the smallest excuse in the world, with an utterly impossible person. It is not," he added, hastily, with a healthy disgust for himself, "a pleasant story."

"Was she as beautiful as Nicolette?"

demanded mademoiselle.

"Quite," said Tressenden, briefly.

"At least," said mademoiselle, "that was an excuse."

"An explanation, perhaps," said Tressenden.

He rose rather hastily from the table. "Come, mademoiselle, let's to our gypsying. Our day is three-quarters

gone-worse luck!"

Mademoiselle sighed, softly. "Gypsying—a pretty word," she said, "but gypsies surely do not say to each other, 'monsieur,' and, 'mademoiselle.' I will call you—what is the name, Ed—ward? That is right, is it not? And you will call me—" she paused, wickedly. "But monsieur knows my name. You will call me, 'Mrs. Ogilvie;' yes?"

"Certainly, if you wish it," said Tressenden, stiffly.

She laughed, joyously. "You may call me that to-morrow. To-day"—she stretched an impulsive hand to him—"to-day I am only and truly 'Toinette."

"'Toinette!" reflected Tressenden. He might have guessed it, he told himself—the quaint, delicious abbreviation. It was like naming a flower

to say it.

"Antoinette, really," said mademoiselle, "but there is too much of the guillotine and grandeur in that for to-day." She smiled at him through her lowered lashes. "And now, where, Edward?" she said.

It was Tressenden who, after all, suggested that the time of the parting of the ways had come, and this through no desire to deliver mademoiselle properly to her guardians at a reasonable hour, but because he knew that the twilight unlocks a man's speech against his will, and that forbidden thoughts sometimes stumble into words, and he was afraid. It was mademoiselle who protested.

"It is yet early," she said. "Look!" The sun was a dull crimson disk low in the west. There were queer, quivering shadows thrown across the lake and a sudden silence of birds'

voices.

"It is a land of enchantment, a strange land," said mademoiselle. "Almost, I am afraid, Edward." She pressed a trifle closer to his arm.

"Time we were well out of it," said Tressenden, and smiled and sighed. "An enchanted land is a dangerous place, 'Toinette."

"I am not afraid of it—with you,"

she said.

"And I am not afraid of it—without you," said Tressenden.

There was a moment's silence. Mademoiselle sighed, softly. "Why must we go?" she asked.

Tressenden fought a moment with the question on his lips. Then he turned desperately, as one driven by an impulse stronger than himself.

"Tell me," he said, harshly, "do you love Mr. Ogilvie? One word-

yes, or no. Tell me."

Mademoiselle hesitated, but in a moment found herself. She put Tressenden's question airily aside. "There is a carriage coming," she said, with apparently no interest in lesser things. "You said we should drive home. Is it this one that takes us?"

Tressenden mechanically raised his stick, as the cabby pulled up in the bend of the drive below. Then he turned bravely to the girl. yes—or no," he demanded. me."

As he sat beside her in the hansom, his face grew strangely white. told himself that he was a scoundrel and many other unpleasant things that he did not hesitate to name, because he was not heartily glad she answered as she did. Mademoiselle had looked from the sky to the ground, from the ground to his face and to the ground again, and had answered, in a suave and altogether inexplicable voice: "But yes, monsieur. Just for a moment you will come in, monsieur," she implored. "There is—I have—in fact, there is something I would say to you. Perhaps," she smiled wickedly, in the gathering darkness, "I would have you help me to console Jeanne. She will be like a madwoman with rage and anxiety. Fortunately, in there not one can understand."

Tressenden smiled bravely back at her. "Upon my word, made-moiselle." he said, "I had quite forgotten Jeanne."

"As for that," 'Toinette. said

frankly, "so had I."

"Wait for me a little moment," said mademoiselle. "In a second, I will be back.'

She ran up the long flight of stairs lightly, as Tressenden entered the drawing-room. Under the white glow of the electric lights the room more than ever bore a striking resemblance to the female in the song, who requested at her death to be

"laid out in brown Holland," but Tressenden was not thinking of the room. He walked gloomily to the fireplace and stared into its blackness. After all, save for one little slip, he had not forgotten himself. He had not been guilty of the unpardonable sin of saying forbidden things to another man's wife. would put no more trust in himself. This should be his last interview with Mrs. Ogilvie, and the shorter and more impersonal the better. And yet, oh, the injustice, the pity of it!

There was a sudden stopping of wheels and a confusion of voices in the street, and a corresponding stir and confusion throughout the house. There seemed an eruption of servants from the lower regions. Tressenden drew himself together at the sound of a familiar voice from the outer door. "Not even the last ten minutes," he said, bitterly.

Mademoiselle, on the stairs, had heard the same voice, and, after the first gasp, with great presence of mind, sat down promptly where she had stood.

Mr. Ogilvie entered the drawingroom briskly—a younger, pompous person than Tressenden remembered him a twelvemonth ago. He caught Tressenden's rather reluctant hand, cordially.

"Most opportune, this, my dear boy," he said. "I was on the point of telegraphing you. I scarcely expected to reach here before this time tomorrow, and I was most anxious to see you. I have quite changed my mind about the entire upper floor. In fact, my wife-" He paused, as a figure appeared on the threshold.

"Tressenden, let me introduce you

to Mrs. Ogilvie."

Tressenden made a hasty step forward. To be introduced to mademoiselle-to 'Toinette, and by her husband! The pitiful farce of it!

"I have already-" he began, and stopped short. The tall and comely woman on the threshold smiled and bowed courteously, and wondered in her heart at the queer manners of Americans. She turned to her husband, smiling. "But 'Toinette," she said, "where is the child? To hurry home on her account, and then not to find her waiting for us!"

She turned with a little mother's cry of gladness at the sound of a footstep in the hall. "Oh, 'Toinette,

here!" she cried.

"I dare say it is news to you," said Ogilvie, "that I have a daughter to introduce, as well as a wife, Tressenden. Antoinette!"

He turned to the girl, but she stepped toward him. There was a certain anxiety mingled with the laughter in her brown eyes. "But we have already met, papa," she said. "Mr. Tressenden called yesterday to see you, and, indeed," she glanced demurely at Tressenden, "he guessed who I was at once, papa. I told him you would no doubt be surprised."

"You have heard, then?" said Ogilvie. "You mustn't imagine that Mrs. Ogilvie is a Parisian like mademoiselle, here. My wife is an Englishwoman," he explained to Tressenden, as one to whom a sixth-cousinly explanation was due; "but Antoinette's father was a Frenchman, and she has been brought up entirely in Paris. I dare say"—he patted the girl's hand lightly as he spoke—"that she will lead us staid New Yorkers a pretty dance. You will dine with us, of course, Tressenden."

"Indeed," said mademoiselle—it was some ten minutes before dinner, and Mr. and Mrs. Ogilvie would be down directly, so she spoke hurriedly—"indeed, I do not see why you are angry. Was it not your own fault?

Always did you name me—never once did I call myself Mrs. Ogilvie. And now, voilà," she sighed, helplessly, "you will not forgive me!"

"How could you!" said Tressenden. A dozen emotions seemed tearing at his heart. He was angry, he was jubilant, he was hurt, he was rejoiced. "But to have tricked me so!" he said.

"Always the truth," protested mademoiselle. "When you asked me if I loved *cher* papa, did I not answer truly?"

"I do not think that I put the question in just that form," said Tressen-

den, grimly.

"And—I am not forgiven?" said mademoiselle. "Such a jest, monsieur, for one who has been ennuied for three whole weeks! Oh, I am very sorry, monsieur."

There was a sound of footsteps on the stairs. Mademoiselle came very close, as close as she had come in

the land of enchantment.

"Edward," said mademoiselle, softly.
In Tressenden's sudden grasp her hand was like blown foam.

"But one little, little untruth there was, monsieur," she whispered. "Your story—oh, monsieur, I knew your story, and when you would not tell it, I was angry that I could not make you, and perhaps I tried. Oh——"

The footsteps on the stair were very near. There was a moment's hushed silence; then mademoiselle faced Tressenden sedately. A mutinous dimple crept to the corner of her mouth, though her brow was severe.

"Such things are not allowed in the convent, monsieur," said made-

moiselle.



A PLANT

MRS. GARDNER—Why, don't you buy your flower seeds from Plantz any more?

MRS. GRAFTER—No; he cheated me last year. He gave me some helianthus-annus seeds that produced nothing but sunflowers.

HONOR

By Gerard Roberts

ORPORAL ROBERT GRAY stood in the doorway of the Anderson mansion, which Colonel Tarleton had chosen for his headquarters while in Charleston, and looked out into the street.

"No one in sight," he murmured. "It wouldn't do for the colonel's orderly to be caught eavesdropping; but I must hear what Piggott has to tell."

He turned and tiptoed down the hall until he stood between two doors. Both were closed; from the left came the sound of talking, but at the right all was silent. Gray tried the knob of the door at that side. It turned without clicking, and the corporal peeped into the room. It was empty, and Gray walked softly to a window opposite him, which gave upon a hard gravel path leading around the house, and pushed it open. Then, cautiously, he returned to the door, examined the bolt, to see that it would slip easily, and went out.

"Now for it," he muttered; and without making a sound he crossed the hall. By putting his eye to the keyhole of the door, Gray could see Tarleton and Piggott. The colonel was seated at a table with paper and ink before him, and he held a quill in his hand. He was not writing, but staring gloomily at the floor and nervously chewing the feather of his pen. Lieutenant Piggott stood facing his commander. As Gray watched, Tarleton looked up.

"Piggott," he said, "this is the third foraging party cut off within a week. The rebels are getting bold. The information we got from that scout before we hanged him must

have been true. The Fox and Lincoln are probably gathering forces to attack me."

"Yes," assented Piggott, "and they seem to know every move you make."

"That's true. Marion is the very devil. Three foraging parties and five spies has he cost me, and the devil alone knows what he has got out of them. Not one of my letters for relief seems to have gone through. The Fox seems to know my weakness, though I have done everything to prevent its becoming known. Sometimes I think—oh, I don't know what to think! Curse the rebels! I wish I could hang them all!" And he looked worried and very angry as he lowered his glance to the carpet again.

"I think," said Piggott, slowly, "that they have a spy among us."

"A spy!" shouted Tarleton, leaping to his feet; "a spy among my men! You're daft."

"Don't get excited, colonel," returned Piggott. "There have been spies in regiments just as good and true as yours."

"But I know every one of my men."
"Oh, no, you don't. We've made

"Oh, no, you don't. several recruits lately."

"But it couldn't be one of them."
"It might be, though. I think it

is.''

"But who is it—who? Quick, man; don't you see you're driving me mad?" And the colonel wiped his pen viciously. "Demme, I never thought of it before. I believed that every one of the boys was true."

"Well," said Piggott, "the new men are Parker and Gregg and Early and

Jewell and—and—

"Yes, yes---"

Piggott hesitated a moment, and then asked:

"Where is your orderly?" "At the end of the hall."

"He can't hear us?"

"No, no."

"Well, then—Gray."

"My orderly?"

"Yes. He's the one I suspect."

"God!" muttered the corporal, without; "he must have watched me.

"Suspect Gray, Piggott? "Why, he's sense!" cried Tarleton. done me more service than any ten of the others. He saved my life in the skirmish at Burton."

"That may be true," said Piggott,

"but I have seen-

"Nonsense! I trust him."

"Very well. But since it is probable that there is a spy in the city, you will at least send out a party to search for him?"

"Yes, certainly."

"At once?"

Tarleton looked at his watch. "Five o'clock," he said. once. You— Hark!" "Yes, at

Gray had slipped and almost fallen. He recovered himself by grasping the knob of the door, but made so much noise that Tarleton heard him. corporal did not wait to hear more: he slipped into the other room and closed the door. He was not a moment too soon, for, just as he was turning the bolt, he heard the door opposite thrown open. The bolt made a slight click in turning, and instantly Gray knew Tarleton and Piggott had heard it, for they crossed the hall and began to pound on the door.

"Open!" cried the colonel.

derly! Corporal of the guard!"

Gray made no reply, but went softly to the window and leaped out. He ran swiftly around the house and came in at the front doorway just in time to see Tarleton and Piggott throw down the door and rush into the room he had left. He drew himself up at the threshold, and when Tarleton turned, as he did in a moment, he saluted.

"Did you call, colonel?" he asked. Tarleton fell back in amazement.

Then he bounded forward and roughly put a hand on Gray's shoulder.

"Where have you been?" shouted, staring fiercely into his eyes.

"Why did you leave your post?" "I beg pardon, colonel, but a suspicious-looking chap peered around the corner of the house a few moments ago and ran off when he saw me on the porch. I went out to watch him.'

"How long were you gone?" "Not more than five minutes."

Tarleton kept his eyes fixed on the corporal's. Gray did not lower his glance. Then Piggott took the colonel's arm and led him to the open window. They talked earnestly for a moment or two, and then returned to

"Take care, young man," said Tarleton, stopping in front of him. "You are only twenty-five. It would be a pity to hang you—a pity."

Gray saluted, and Tarleton and Piggott went into the office. This time they did not close the door. The corporal took up his stand on the porch, facing the street.

"Phew!" he said; "close shave! I wonder if the colonel suspects. I'm glad I'm going to-night. I—" He

heard Tarleton call.

He turned, advanced to the office door, saluted and stood at attention. Tarleton finished sealing a letter, rose and handed it to him.

"Take that to Captain Preston and tell him to send Parker to take your place. You are free for the night.

"Yes, sir. Thank you, sir." Gray saluted once more as he turned

away.

"A magnificent soldier, Piggott," he heard Tarleton say, "and a loyal gentleman, I believe. I should hate to hang him."

"I won't give you a chance," said the object of the colonel's compassion to himself, as he stepped off the porch and walked down the path.

When he reached the street he found it deserted. It was growing dark, and candles sent forth threads of light from the windows of the houses. The air was cool and pleasant. Overhead the stars were beginning to come out, and at the end of the street the moon shone like a lantern.

"A fine night," thought Gray, as he alked along. "Let's see; I guess I walked along. had better go to my quarters and open this before giving it to Preston. No telling what it is. Ah, how much better I shall feel when I get out of this old place! Last time I shall come down here."

He came to a lonely part of the town, turned down a dark lane and finally reached a shackly building, before the door of which hung a battered signboard bearing the word, "Inn." No lights shone in the windows, however, nor did any sounds of merrymaking come through the rickety Gray pushed it open, felt his way to a shaky ladder, and climbed There he drew flint, into the loft. steel and tinder from his pocket, and in a moment succeeded in lighting a candle, which illuminated the room It was a bare, barn-like place, with cracks and crannies. The only furniture was a pallet in one corner, a cupboard in another, a bare table in the centre, on which Gray placed the candle, and a box, which served as a chair.

Gray drew the box up to the table and sat down. He listened intently for an instant, and then took from his belt Tarleton's letter and a knife. The blade of the knife he held in the flame of the candle until it was heated; then he slipped it under the seal of the letter and removed the wax in one piece. Putting this carefully aside, he unfolded the paper and read the letter.

Captain Preston is hereby ordered to detach a party to search the town thoroughly for spies. Any persons found with treasonable documents upon them are to be shot immediately.

TARLETON, Colonel Commanding.

Gray gave a long, low whistle. "Glad I opened it," he said. he warmed the wax over the candle and pressed it down in the spot it had occupied, and replaced the letter in From the cupboard he took plain clothes, which he rolled up in a bundle and placed on the table.

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"Now for my papers," he mur-He went to the cupboard mured. again, stooped, and raised one of the floor boards. He felt around between the beams for a moment and found a small package. He examined this at the table and discovered it to be in-Then he took from his breast a leather miniature-case and opened it. Within was the picture of a girl. soft blond hair curled in little ringlets over a broad white forehead; her cheeks were flushed with charming modesty; her eyes looked lovingly into Gray's, and her lips were slightly parted in a smile.

The corporal gazed at the face intently for a moment. His eyes grew tender and he smiled. "Dear Dorothy," he murmured, and raised the picture gently to his lips. Then he ripped the case with his knife, put in the papers at the back of the picture,

and sewed up the rent.

"That's done," he said, and placed the case in his breast again. He put the bundle under his arm, wrapped his cloak about him, and blew out the candle. Groping his way to the ladder, he stumbled down it and out into the lane. It was but a short walk to Preston's quarters, a house which, in the dark—for thick clouds now hid the moon and stars—was almost concealed from view by trees. As Gray made his way to the door, he dropped his bundle at the foot of one of these trees, where he could find it easily. He went boldly to the door and delivered Tarleton's letter and message.

Then he hastened to find his bundle, and with it retired into the neighboring hedge. There he changed his clothing, leaving his uniform and coming out on the street as a civilian.

He walked rapidly until he came to a large house, from one or two windows of which a dim light came. stood some distance back from the road, and there was a hedge with a gate in it,

and from it a gravel path led through a lawn to the door. Gray went up to the gate and carefully pushed it open. He passed through the opening, and the gate swung to behind him with a Instantly, somewhere in the darkness ahead, Gray heard a musket cocked, and a stern voice cried, "Who goes there?" He dropped to his knees and worked cautiously toward the grass at the right of the path. could not hear the one who had challenged him, but he was afraid that his own movements, cautious as they were, would betray him. He succeeded in reaching the grass, however, and laid himself down close to the The same voice cried again: "Who goes there?" and the questioner came down the path, the gravel crunching under his feet. At the gate he halted, and Gray could have touched him as he stood there with musket at "ready." For an instant Gray thought of grappling with him, but fear that in the struggle the musket might go off and give an alarm restrained him. The man was one of Tarleton's dragoons, Gray could see, and was evidently a sentinel. He was not particularly courageous, for, after standing a moment, he muttered:

"It's a lonesome place. But I guess it must have been a dog." With that he turned and walked up the path. Gray waited a few moments, then rose and went slowly and cautiously around to the back of the house. There he knocked at a small door, and was at once admitted by an old negress, who appeared to know him She conducted him up-stairs to the drawing-room, dimly lighted by a few candles on the centre-table. Asking him to wait, she withdrew, and for a moment all was silent. Then Gray heard a rustle of skirts, and the next instant the girl, whose picture he had gazed on in the loft came into the

room.

"Dorothy!" he cried, holding out

"Good evening, Robert," she said, going to him, but skilfully avoiding his embrace by taking both his hands.

"I did not expect you. Every night for two weeks you have said you could not get leave and would not call again without it. Do you know you are very foolish to come this way, particularly without your uniform? There is a sentinel outside who might have shot you."

"Well, what if he had?"

"Robert," she answered, reproachfully, "you should not say that;" and her eyes filled with tears.

"Forgive me, dear. I wouldn't hurt you for the world. I came past him

in safety."

"If only mamma had not insisted on having him, just because Clara and I were to be alone to-night. But never mind that. Tell me what you've been doing since you were here last. Why, I haven't seen you since last night."

"No, and it seems a year to me."

"Does it? You poor boy! Well, come here and sit beside me and tell me everything." She took his hand and led him to a sofa.

Gray paused a long time before replying. Finally, he said: "Dorothy, I must tell you something to-night. Do you remember how we played together as children, and how we loved each other even then? Do you remember that you promised to be my wife?"

"Yes, dear," she answered, quietly.
"Well, little girl, I must tell you something that may cause you to take back your promise, and it is almost harder than I can bear. Ten years ago I went to Paris. That was before the war began. As soon as I had news of the rebellion, I hastened to America and joined the army in New York."

"Yes. Well?"

"Well, the general honored me with his confidence, showed me great favor and sent me here."

"I shall love Clinton for that," said Dorothy, clasping her hands in delight.

"Clinton? No!"

"No?" echoed Dorothy.

"Not Clinton, but—" he hesitated a long moment—" Washington."

"Washington!" repeated the girl, in almost a scream. With a violent effort she controlled herself. She looked steadily at him, then rose. "You are a rebel?"

"I am fighting for my country," he answered.

"Then what are you doing here? Are you a deserter, or are you—?" she stopped, choked, and could not go on. She stood for a moment silent, her hands clenched and her eyes on his, then, "For pity's sake," she cried, "say you are not a——"

Her voice rose almost to a shriek, but she checked herself suddenly, and murmured, "Hark! what is that?"

For a moment Gray could distinguish nothing. Then he heard the dull tramp of a body of soldiers gradually growing more distinct as the men came nearer. He could hear them open the gate, march up the path and answer the sentinel's challenge. Then some one uttered a sharp, "Halt!" and with a clicking and jangling of accoutrements the sounds ceased. In a moment some one pounded heavily on the door. The noise broke Dorothy's silence.

"They are coming in," she whispered; "soldiers! And they will find you here without your uniform. Quick! get out of the window."

Gray took her hand and led her to the window. He smiled at her, as he pointed to a figure walking to and fro in the shadow of the house.

Dorothy shrank back.

"Too late!" she murmured. "What shall I do, oh, what shall I do?"

"Do? Nothing, of course," Gray returned, placing her in a chair at the table and putting a book in her hand. "They are merely inspecting, probably. But I don't wish to be seen; I'll get behind the sofa."

But Dorothy looked at him with a great doubt in her eyes. "What if—?" she said; but Gray disappeared behind the high back of the sofa, and the old negress, trembling with fright, appeared in the doorway.

"De'se breakin' down de do'," she chattered, and, in fact, the knocks

were shaking the house.

"Why don't you let them in, Clara?" asked her mistress, and with

a muttered, "Yas'm," Clara clattered off to open the door. The knocks ceased, a gruff voice gave orders, and heavy steps came up the stairs. In a moment more a burly sergeant appeared in the doorway.

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"Beg pardon, Miss Jarvis," he said, saluting awkwardly; "I'm sorry to intrude, but I have orders to search Charleston. I know that you've stood for the old king and I won't detain you a minute. I don't think I'll find what I'm looking for here."

"What are you looking for?" asked the girl.

"A spy."

"A spy?" Dorothy started violently, but kept her eyes on the sergeant's face. She hesitated a moment, and then said, slowly, "No, I don't think you'll find him here. I and mine have always been loyal. You may search the house."

"Thank you, miss," returned the sergeant. He saluted again and went to the head of the staircase. From there he bawled out orders, and in a moment his men were running through every room.

Then Gray rose and went to Dorothy. She sat with wide-open, horror-stricken eyes fixed on the doorway.

"Dorothy!" he said, taking her hand. She snatched it back. "Don't you dare, sir!" she said, in a harsh voice and without looking at him. "To think that the man I loved should so meanly sacrifice his honor!"

"Dorothy," cried Gray, "I have kept my honor safe. Some may fight openly against the enemy, but

others must fight in secret."

But the girl only shook her head. Gray knelt at her side and tried to kiss her lips, but she pushed him back. "Have you ceased to love me?" he asked, sadly.

"Love you?" she answered; "I

despise you!"

With a deep sigh, Gray rose to his feet. "I feared it," he said. "My work is done, and to-night I came to say good-bye, before leaving to join my friends. The war will soon

be over and I had hoped to find you waiting for me at the end. I thought that I had sacrificed everything for my country, but it seems she calls for one more offering upon her altar. I must give it."

"I can never forgive you," said

Dorothy, still hard and cold.

"Good-bye, sweetheart," said Gray, and he kissed her hand.

"Where are you going?" she

asked.

"To bury my life under the ashes of your love," he answered, turning toward the door. The sergeant at that moment returned. He stared curiously at Gray and then turned his eyes on Dorothy.

"We've found no one," said he. "I beg pardon, miss—this gentleman—if he is a friend of yours, of course it's all right. If not— Is he your friend?" he asked, suddenly.

Dorothy looked at the sergeant fixedly. Her face became ghastly in its paleness and her lips trembled.

"No," she said, in so low a tone that the sergeant could hardly hear her.

"No?" he inquired. She nodded.

"Then I must search him."

"I'll save you the trouble, sergeant," said Gray; "I am the man you want, I think."

The sergeant looked at him closely. "I know you," he said; "you are

Corporal Gray."

"Yes. Sergeant Dundas, isn't it?"
"I don't want you," said Dundas.
"I'm looking for a spy."

"Then you do want me."

Dundas gazed intently at him for a moment, and then, "So?" he said, slowly.

"Here," answered Gray, handing

him the miniature-case.

Dorothy looked at it, and shivered. The sergeant took it from Gray's hand and examined it closely. He saw the new stitches, ripped them and drew out the papers. He glanced at them hurriedly and placed them in his belt. Then he said:

"I suppose you are ready?"

"Yes," answered Gray.

"My orders were to shoot you at once."

"Will you permit me to have that picture?"

"Certainly," and the sergeant gave

Gray placed it in his breast. "Thanks, sergeant. A moment, and I am at your service." He went over to Dorothy. She sat as in a stupor. He took her face in his

hands and kissed her on the forehead. "Good-bye, my love," he whispered. He walked to the door. "Now, sergeant, if you please."

"After you, sir," said Dundas,

bowing.

They went out and down the stairs. There Dundas gathered his men. Gray took off his coat and hat, and they bound his arms at the elbows. Quietly and solemnly they marched around to the back of the house. There was a great tree directly before Dorothy's window, and against its trunk they placed him. The firing party took its station near the house wall, and Dundas advanced to Gray.

"Sergeant, how beautiful it is! It is a pleasure to die on such a night."

"Do you wish a priest?" asked

Dundas.

Gray shook his head. "I need no one to teach me how to die," he said.

"Good-bye," said Dundas, suddenly putting out his hand. They shook hands as well as the prisoner's bonds would permit.

Dundas stepped back. Gray raised his eyes, and they fell full on Dorothy leaning far out over the

window-sill.

Her face was drawn with anguish. He knew she could see him, for the clouds had passed and moonbeams played upon him. He saw her stretch her arms toward him, and heard her say:

"Robert, forgive! I—love—you."
"Dear Dorothy!" he answered,

with a smile.

At that moment the soldiers fired, and, still smiling, he fell toward her arms.

FORBIDDEN SPEECH

THE passion you forbade my lips to utter
Will not be silenced. You must hear it in
The sullen thunders when they roll and mutter,
And when the tempest nears, with wail and din,
I know your calm forgetfulness is broken,
And to your heart you whisper, "He has spoken!"

All Nature understands and sympathizes
With human passion. When the restless sea
Turns in its futile search for peace, and rises
To plead and to pursue, it speaks for me.
And with each desperate billow's anguished fretting
Your heart must tell you, "He is not forgetting!"

When unseen hands in lightning strokes are writing Mysterious words upon a cloudy scroll, Know that my pent-up passion is inditing A cypher message for your woman's soul. And when the lawless winds rush by you, shricking, Let your heart say, "Now his despair is speaking!"

Love comes nor goes at beck or call of reason;
Nor is Love silent, though it says no word.

By day or night, in any clime or season,
A dominating passion must be heard.

So shall you hear, through Junes and through Decembers,
The voice of Nature saying, "He remembers!"

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

RIVALS

FLORA—Fred says that I am the only girl who can make him happy. Lena—Poor fellow! He must be miserable.

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WITH NAUGHT BETWEEN

DAME RUMOR vows Dolly and I are to wed, But I meet the mild charge with a shake of the head, And I say to my friendly accusers, with glee, "There is nothing at all between Dolly and me!"

If a glimpse you could steal of us sometimes, I know, Side by side on the sofa, the lights very low, You would willingly with my assertion agree: "There is nothing at all between Dolly and me!"

ROY FARRELL GREENE.

HER GOWN

TO-NIGHT, while I still remember That beauty is not for long, That May's half-way to December, I'll weave you a gown of song.

I'll pluck you a wreath of roses
From the rare old garden of rhyme;
I'll gather a garland of posies
That will last to the end of time.

And there, on your dainty fingers, I'll place some couplets of rings, In which the melody lingers That is heard when a poet sings.

I'll sprinkle your hair with kisses
That are jewels expressed in words;
I'll clasp round your neck the blisses
That are found in the songs of birds.

And your little feet on the fender I'll put in a metre divine;
For I am your love, so tender,
And you are that wife of mine.

TOM HALL.



VOX, ET PRÆTEREA NIHIL

MRS. HATTERSON—The ladies of the parish got up a baby show for the benefit of the hospital.

MRS. CATTERSON—Was it a success?

"Oh, a howling success."



HUMANE

PATIENT—Doctor, suppose this operation isn't a success?

Doctor (cheerfully)—Well, I'm going to give you enough ether so you will never know the difference.



CLARA—I have an idea that he is really in love with me.

MAUD—Why don't you marry him and teach him better?

AN EASY VICTIM

By Herbert Grissom

CENE I.—The breakfast-room of the Duckson-Drakes. Mrs. Duckson-Drakes, who is beautiful enough to be pretty in the morning, at one end of table; Mr. Duckson-Drakes, wearing an unbecoming air of settled despair, at the other. Time, a Monday morning.

MR. DUCKSON-DRAKES (in sepulchral tones, as he contemplates an open letter)—Kate, how would you like to spend the Winter in a tent?

MRS. DUCKSON-DRAKES (insulting a fat pug by offering him plain muffin)
—Mercy on us! What an idiotic question! Has the omelet gone to

your head?

MR. D.-D. (with some appearance of the tragic)—Well, the blow has fallen! George Gordon says in this letter that I must pay the notes and the interest on the mortgages, or he will foreclose next week.

MRS. D.-D.—Dear! dear! What impetuosity! The money is not more

than a year past due.

Mr. D.-D.—Evidently a thought of Gordon's. He says he dislikes to press a masculine friend, but adds the justly famous statement that, "business is business."

MRS. D.-D. (placating the pug with a lump of sugar)—And if he fore-closes——?

MR. D.-D.—If he forecloses, we shall be enthusiastic candidates for dinner invitations, with the privilege of staying for breakfast. In other words, we are on our last legs, financially, with nowhere to sit down. We are paupers, in fact.

MRS. D.-D.—Really, this is serious!

Fancy breaking up, when we've just found such a jewel of a cook! If George Gordon is really in earnest, something must be done.

Mr. D.-D.—If he's really in earnest—and he has the symptoms—something undoubtedly will be done. As for us, I can't see anything—

Mrs. D.-D.—You seldom can, so early in the day. But (seriously) it seems we're in desperate straits. Of course, we can't think of calmly accepting poverty—

MR. D.-D. (driveling)—"Some are born poor, some achieve poverty, and

some----'

MRS. D.-D.—Oh, hush—do! · What do you think your chances would be to make a decent living in business?

Mr. D.-D. (turning pale)—Pray, don't mention it! Great Scott, Kate! you surely don't expect me to work? Why, if there were no other reason, my engagements wouldn't permit.

MRS. D.-D. (coldly)—Of course, then, business is out of the question. Can you suggest something that wouldn't take any of your time, or fatigue you too greatly?

MR. D.-D. (hesitatingly)—Well, I

have an idea; but—er—

Mrs. D.-D.—But what? Out with it, before it gives you brain-fever.

MR. D.-D. (with increasing hesitation)—But I don't know—er—whether it would exactly meet with your approval.

MRS. D.-D.—Are you contemplating burglary, forgery, or something of that sort? If so, don't hesitate on my

account.

MR. D.-D.—Absurd! No; the fact is—well—(rings for whiskey and seltzer)

you know that Gordon admires you greatly; he always has, and never overlooks an opportunity to make love to you——

Mrs. D.-D.—Well?

Mr. D.-D. (pouring out a long one)
—Well, couldn't you—that is—don't
you think it probable that you could
influence him to——

MRS. D.-D. (contemplating him with an uncomfortable stare)—Has it occurred to you how I could best accomplish it?

MR. D.-D.—Why—er—you might encourage him in being attentive to you—just enough, you know; nothing serious—

MRS. D.-D.—And at the proper moment, I suppose, you would rush in with a large carving-knife and threaten to probe him if he didn't cancel the notes and mortgages?

Mr. D.-D. (hastily)—Oh, I don't mean that, exactly But you women understand how to make a monkey of a

man----

MRS. D.-D.—Sometimes they require no assistance. Well, it seems to rest with me whether we are to have anything in the future to eat and wear.

MR. D.-D. (pouring another long one)—And drink. Doubtless you'll see him at the Bigges' dinner to-night. Meanwhile, I'll run over to Philadelphia for a couple of days, and see if I

can't blarney your Uncle Henry once more. Really, Kate, you needn't hesitate; it's very simple, if you don't mind it.

Mrs. D.-D. (cheerfully)—Oh, I don't mind it! On the contrary—

MR. D.-D. (eying her sharply)—I say, Kate, you must keep a tight rein on Gordon; he's no slow coach.

Mrs. D.-D. (placidly)—I know.

MR. D.-D. frowns heavily, empties the seltzer-siphon at the fat pug and departs. MRS. D.-D. remains, gazing steadily into space.

Scene II.—The Duckson-Drake's dining-room. Time, the following

Wednesday evening.

Enter Mr. D.-D., who seems surprised at not finding Mrs. D.-D. present. Advances to table, where he finds letter addressed to himself. Reads:

DEAR TOM:

Your plan worked beautifully. Really, it was too easy. Enclosed you will find your notes and release for the mortgages. George and I sail this (Wednesday) afternoon forwell, Arcady. I hope this narrow escape from penury will be a great immoral lesson to you. Take good care of the cook.

Kathering.

(This is merely the beginning of the scene that ensues, but it is perhaps better to drop the curtain here.)



JASMINE

I ENVIED my sweet flower lying Upon a breast more sweet and fair, And it with envy, too, was dying, To find its charms transcended there.

When morning came the flower was missing, Its bloom and beauty vanished quite. I envy still; for it perished kissing Its life away on her bosom white.

JAMES JEFFREY ROCHE.

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HE—Are you fond of flowers?
SHE—Passionately. I can scarcely wait for Winter to come.

HOT CINDERS IN COLD ASHES

By Flora Bigelow Dodge

INNER is served."
The announcement was received with a sense of relief by the house-party assembled in the big hall of Elm Court. They had been waiting half an hour for the Duchess of Lyons.

She came down the winding staircase just at that moment, a vision of loveliness, in her clinging white gown with long, filmy sleeves shivering in the

current of air behind her.

"I am afraid I am always just a little late," she said, in the sweetest voice possible. Then she took her host's arm and they led the way in to dinner.

"I am sure it does not matter in the least," said Mr. Bryce, struggling with a momentary desire to choke her. It would not have taken much strength to choke her, he reflected, as they seated themselves.

Her throat was long and slim, like some bird's, and she had great, pitiful eyes, like those of a deer. One always

seemed to look into them.

On the left of Mr. Bryce sat the Honorable Mrs. Hogue, who invariably confided to her latest and most intimate friend that, while she did not absolutely dislike Americans, for she knew some who were both nice and useful, she could not but feel that they were utterly lacking in caste. To do her justice, she bravely overcame the feeling and accepted every invitation from the Bryces which she could obtain. Perhaps brokers were an exception, after all. She had made a great deal of money through the tips Mr. Bryce had given her, and was planning extensive alterations at her country place; and she was paying bills—a thing she had not done for at least six years. It did seem rather a waste of money to pay old bills, instead of buying something she really needed. But some of the tradespeople were becoming, as she said, "tiresome," and, having the money, she had not the moral courage to ignore any longer their repeated demands.

The duchess looked about the table, observing the Elm Court house-party with a feeling of mild disappointment. She had not hoped for "Indians or niggers," but certainly for something more interesting than the remains of the London season that she saw every-

where she went.

She soon discovered, however, that she had overlooked one face. A man never would have passed it without looking again, though it was little more than a child's.

"Do tell me, Lord Hetherington, who that girl is just opposite, half-hidden behind the orchids; the girl in white muslin. She looks like an angel—so out of place among all of us here."

Her remark was followed by a little

rippling laugh.

His lordship lifted his monocle and carefully surveyed the girl in question. Then he turned to the duchess, and said: "By Jove! she is quite lovely. I wonder if that is the impecunious Southern relative that I heard was living with the Bryces. I'll ask Lady Glyn-Thule."

Lord Hetherington carried on a conversation with his other neighbor in an undertone for a moment. "Now I can tell you all about her," he said, turning to the duchess. "She is Miss

Betty Sturgis, from South Carolina. She's seventeen, an orphan, living with a maiden aunt on a plantation down among the darkies and cotton fields. She has come to England recently to spend the Winter and Spring with her other aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Bryce. She is poor and well-bred, as you see; rather delicate and has, I believe, a wonderful contralto voice. And she's inclined to be religious and good."

"How lonely she must feel here. I am longing to meet her; she is so differ-

ent."

Then she turned toward her host. "I am so interested in your niece, Mr. Bryce. How I should like to paint her! I don't know when I have ever seen such a beautiful head."

"You don't say so!" said Mr. Bryce, delightedly. "Betty is a good little girl, but I never thought her so pretty, myself. I suppose I remember the mother as being so much more beautiful that it takes the wind out of the child's sails. You would not think I could have such a lovely sister after looking at me, would you? Her neighbor, Mr. Drake—what's left of him after Spion Kop—seems to be of your way of thinking, doesn't he? Did you notice how he looked at her then?"

The Honorable Henry Drake's face, cold as it certainly was, seemed to be melting beneath the influence of this Carolina blossom that had been transplanted over to England. He watched her as a boy does a new toy, whose mechanism he cannot quite understand. He was only ten years her senior, but he seemed older, owing to African suns and winds. His right arm was in a sling.

He had not the slightest intention of letting Mr. Hogue talk to her any longer than he could help. Married men nowadays got too many innings

with girls, he thought.

He asked her all sorts of questions about her home, infatuated by her answers, in her Southern intonation.

Betty Sturgis's skin was fair, with a child's frail coloring. The golden curls were drawn unwillingly back from the small face, and pinned low at the neck as if she knew they would rebel at the slightest provocation.

The limpid blue eyes were strangely thoughtful for her years, deep-set and almost stern in their purity. The mouth was a little large and too full to be in harmony with the rest of her face. In her mouth one felt the promise of her possibilities; in her eyes one saw what she was now.

She was dressed in a plain white muslin gown. A black velvet sash with long trailing ends was tied about her waist. Her figure was rounded, her throat full.

"And do you skate, as well as ride?" asked Henry Drake, lowering his head nearer to hers.

"No, indeed! Where would we get the ice down on the plantation?"

"Oh, I forgot. Well, what do you do with yourself all the time? You say you have no neighbors within ten miles?"

"What do I do? Oh, I don't know; let's see. I study with Aunt Belinda in the morning, for about an hour. She lives with me, you know. In that time she has taught me all she can spare at once. Then she has to go and study up for the next day."

"But why does not your Aunt Belinda get you a governess, since her teaching you seems such a—a mental strain on her?" he suggested.

"Governess! Oh, she wouldn't allow that for anything in the world. She would be afraid of what else might be taught me besides lessons—all kinds of bad things and wickednesses."

Betty threw back her head and laughed, with irresponsible delight. "Then, after lessons, I ride and try to break the colts a little every day. We raise horses to sell, you know. Then I go round to the cabins and talk to the colored people, and they tell me all their little troubles. Then, I reckon, dinner-time comes along, and after that we take naps."

"What a funny idea! Do you really sleen?"

really sleep?"

"Certainly. Then we go for a drive, aunty and I. She is nervous about

my driving, so we go in the Sunflower. It has yellow wheels and a brown body, and we use mules 'most always, because the man aunty was in love with used mules. She's so sentimental, aunty is!"

"Go on—do," he murmured, coaxingly, feeling a great longing to meet "aunty." "Have you pretty drives and good roads? What is the country

like?"

"Oh, it's all sorts of red sand, pine trees and brooks and buzzards. Yes, it's pretty to me, because I was raised there, and in the Spring the jasmine smells so sweet. After our drive I sing to aunty before supper. She likes, my songs, because the man she used to be in love with sang coonsongs to her 'most always."

"He was not colored, was he?" Henry Drake asked, in quite a changed

tone.

"Colored! Dear me, no! He was a general, reared down in Carolina and killed in the war. She would not marry him, because grandma was a Quakeress and made her believe it was sinful to fight. I don't; I just love fighters." Her eyes rested a moment tenderly on his crippled arm, and she went on: "Poor aunty talks about him 'most every day when we go out carriage-riding. She doesn't tell much, but sort of recollects things, and begins, 'That reminds me when—'You know the kind of talk old people use."

"Yes, I know. Do you have high tea then?"

"Supper, you mean? Yes; usually on the piazza or in the front parlor, instead of the dining-room. Hoe-cake and 'Sally Lunn' and mush and tea—you know the kind of things I mean, that give people awful dreams if they aren't used to them? Then my old mammy comes for me, and I go to bed about nine or ten, after I have read to aunty for an hour from 'Pilgrim's Progress' or 'The Lives of the Saints.' Now, suppose you tell me something about yourself. Are you married?"

There was a perfect lack of shyness in

her manner; she possessed that freedom of manner peculiar to Southern women, however much they may have lived in seclusion.

"No, I am not married; I tried to be, and failed. But that was a long time ago. I see very little of women now. My life is given up to ambitions. I find them safer playmates than your sex." His voice turned hard as he spoke.

"I am sorry you don't like women," she said, gently; "because I liked you as soon as I looked at you. You seemed so honest, and I felt as if we

would be friends."

He glanced at her suspiciously for an instant. Then his face softened, and he answered: "How nice of you! I believe we shall be friends. God knows we all have need of friends. find wives and women lovers, but friends are few and far between. woman offers a man her heart, and he claims only her body. Too late she finds her poor, lonely heart floating away into space. But I forgot I was talking to a girl; yet you are so strangely sympathetic I cannot believe you are only seventeen. Forgive me. We men grow careless in England. Shall I point out some of the people here to you? That lady who has been staring at you during dinner is the Duchess of Lyons, and one of the nicest women that ever lived; but she has aspirations to paint her friends, which is a trial, as her portraits take weeks of patient sittings. The next man is rather in love with her. He is Lord Hetherington. He rides well; that is about all I know of him. The lady on his right, with her dress too tight across her chest, is the Countess of Glyn-Thule. She is nicknamed 'the educator' in London because it is part of every young man's education to have an affair with her. She is not as young as she feels. lives for flirting and bridge. I don't know the man next to her, but he is sure to be rich. Look at his nose: I think he refused the ham. The woman next him is interested in woman's rights and reforming morals. She will have a busy week here. Your neighbor is known as the husband of Mrs. Hogue. His wife lives for the stockexchange and racing, and does very well, for she pockets her gains and never pays her losses. Then come two or three more I don't know. Now, that next fellow is perhaps one of the most conspicuous men of the day. You see how Mrs. Powis is being thrilled by him. He is Percival Hutch-He thinks himself the most brilliant young man in England, and I am inclined to agree with him. Just watch the other two people lean over to listen to his talk. They are absolutely absorbed, and how he loves the gallery!"

Percival Hutchins asked to meet Miss Sturgis as soon as the men had finished smoking. He endeavored, however, not to appear too anxious, and put on his most casual and bored manner when Mr. Drake brought him up. They exchanged a few platitudes, and he said, condescendingly: "I liked your country, Miss Sturgis; every one was most awfully kind to me; in fact, too kind. It annoys me to be persistently invited by people whom I have never met."

Betty's Southern blood was aroused. Men from her part of the world did not talk to women in that offhand manner. She answered proudly, her nostrils quivering: "Had they met you first, I am sure you would have received fewer invitations."

Hutchins shrugged his shoulders. "I had not heard you were such a wit, Miss Sturgis," he said.

"Pray take all the credit; it is you who have inspired me," she answered, dropping her eyes. The color fled from her face, leaving her very pale. Hutchins turned to console himself with the duchess, who was still laughing at him.

Betty went over to Mr. Drake. "Let us go into the conservatory," she said; "anywhere to get away from—the fire. It is so hot in here!"

"Miss Sturgis, I can hardly believe you have not been out in the world before. You have such perfect poise of manner. Just now you seemed transformed. You are without shyness and talk as if you were used to ruling a salon. You were right to snub that fellow as you did. Come and sit down under this palm. It is very nice to get you off alone here. I wonder if you will be annoyed if I tell you something? I say it with all reverence: you remind me so much of the only woman I was ever in love with. It is six years since I last saw her."

Betty's blue eyes opened wide with sympathy. There was a little pause; then she said, in the sweetest voice imaginable, "How could you think that would annoy me? I am so, so glad!"

He watched her face with its rapid changes, with all the spirituality come

back into it again.

"And why didn't you marry her?" she asked, promptly, as all unhappiness seemed to her quite unnecessary.

It often does at her age.

"Because," he answered, bitterly, "there was a duke's eldest son in love with her, and I was only the second son of a peer at that time. Perhaps you don't know that in England the eldest son gets the estate, and the younger sons shift for themselves. I was a younger son, until my poor brother was killed in Africa two years ago, and now at my father's death I shall succeed to the property and title. In the meantime, Ivy has been married five years to the duke. She has had two children, and, I fancy, is contented enough with her My feelings are only cold ashes now, or I could not speak of this to you; but, all the evening, you have reminded me of her. It has carried me back and made me feel alive again."

"I think it is all dreadfully sad, but I would just like to see any one make me marry a man I didn't love. I reckon the girl can't be very much like me in her nature. I hope she is wretched now, for making you un-

happy.''

Drake threw back his head and laughed. "You are most sympathetic, but I sincerely hope that she is happy, that some day we will meet on a different basis and bury the past. But,

Miss Sturgis, your way of turning your head is so extraordinarily like hers, your complexion, your hair and eyes, every movement of your body, everything about you—except your mouth. Her lips were thinner and her mouth was—"

"Go on; you can say it—more beautiful."

"No; less human." He rose suddenly, and they went back to the drawing-room.

The next day was Sunday. After five-o'clock tea had been served in the great hall, the duchess asked if Betty would sing some of her coonsongs. She took the girl's hand and, in the tenderest, most caressing voice imaginable, said: "Dear Miss Sturgis, we did not like to bother you last night, but if you knew how we were longing to hear you sing!" And she turned her great, pitiful eyes on Betty, as if her last drop of blood depended on the song.

Betty looked over toward her aunt. "Could I turn most of the lights out?" she said. "I like to play in the dark and imagine myself back on the old plantation."

"Of course," called out Lord Hetherington, settling himself on a cushion at the duchess's feet; "anything you like."

Mr. Bryce turned out some of the lamps and lowered others. The girl walked meditatively to the piano in the corner and ran her fingers lightly over the keys, while she gazed at the ceiling as if to collect her thoughts.

There was a dead silence in the room. Her chords seemed to have hypnotized every one in the party. Then on their ears fell the wonderful, soft notes of her little plantation lullaby, and in the dim light one could imagine the young mother in the cotton fields, rocking her obstreperous little pickaninny to sleep; and one could almost see the hot glow of the setting sun falling across the dark cabin.

The plaintive notes rose and fell. When the song was ended Betty turned toward her little audience. They would not let her rise.

"Go on," said the duchess; "go on, I beg of you."

Betty had a voice teeming with infinite pathos and gentleness; deep and soft. She had caught to perfection the break in certain notes peculiar to the negroes.

Then she sang the song of an old slave woman, whose husband had been sold many years before, one who, until the ebb of her life, had waited in vain for his return.

No one spoke for a moment, after the last note died away like a whisper among the ashes of the wood-fire. The duchess wiped her eyes. Percival Hutchins sat with his eyes tightly closed. The cuckoo clock broke the silence. Mrs. Bryce rose from the teatable.

"I am afraid we must all go to dress for dinner; it is late and we need a little time to rest," she said.

II

When Henry Drake left Elm Court a few mornings later, his feelings were most varied. He realized he would miss this young girl as he had missed only one woman in his life, until time, the great softener, had soothed him. He was not sure whether he had fallen in love with Betty, or whether it was only the memory of the other woman, now awakened by this wonderful likeness.

He counted the days to the first of March, when he should meet the little Southerner at "Shroone." From London he sent her an enormous bunch of lilies to wear at the county ball. It had been very long since he had sent any woman flowers.

Betty lay awake half the night after he left, thinking about him. His personality was strangely attractive to her. His reserve and sudden bursts of frankness, which are so incongruous in the Englishman, charmed her as she had never been charmed before. He was so thoroughly a gentleman! Most people liked him, that she saw plainly; but did any one know him really well? All she really knew of him was that he was one of the best shots in England; and that he never flirted with married women.

Poor child! She knew she liked him entirely too well; but, like most very young persons, she was satisfied with the intoxication of loving, without a thought of any return.

Betty gradually made more acquaintances, but to her nobody could compare with the Duchess of Lyons and Henry Drake; possibly it was because they were the first to be kind to her

in a strange land.

When the time came for the Bryces to take Betty to "Shroone," Mrs. Bryce was ill with an attack of influenza; Mr. Bryce would not leave her. The duchess, however, came begging that Betty might be allowed to go alone with her maid, as Mr. Drake would take charge of her on the train going down.

It was a typical English day, drizzling and wet, when her uncle left her in Mr. Drake's hands at Euston Station; but the dampness made her skin brighter and her hair more curly. The dark-blue tailor serge she wore revealed the curves of her figure to per-

fection.

When they were shut into the compartment, which Mr. Drake had carefully reserved, he wrapped her feet in his mink rug, because it was warmer than hers, put her cushions behind her and brought her an armful of papers and magazines; but he gave her no time to look at one, as they had so much to talk about. Both were genuinely sorry when the journey came to its end.

Mr. and Mrs. Hogue, Lord Hetherington and one or two others had come by the same train. Occasional lights flickered through the cottage windows as they all drove into the park. The lodge was a long way from the house. Betty felt that, if she had not had Mr. Drake with her, she would have died of fright at the array of footmen, when the light from the

vast entrance blazed before her eyes and the huge carved doors were swung

As they reached the drawing-room, the duchess stepped forward from behind her tea-table to greet them. kissed Betty tenderly, and said: "It was good of you to come alone, and I won't let you feel shy for a moment. Let me present you to some of the others."

Later the duke came in and asked to be presented to Betty. He was a small, pale man, very quiet and very shy.

When they had all assembled for dinner, Betty found, to her disgust, that Percival Hutchins had arrived on a later train.

"I don't know if you have met. Sturgis, may I present Mr. Hutchins?" said the duke, who was standing near Betty at the time.

Hutchins put on his most blasé ex-

pression and made a bow.

Betty said, feebly: "Don't you remember? I think we met before at Elm Court, some weeks ago." She thought they might as well be friendly, now that her anger had subsided, although she was sure she never could like him. He shrugged his shoulders as he answered: "I remember only a very dull visit of two days."

In reality, he had forgotten that Mrs. Bryce was any relation of the girl to whom he was speaking. He meant to be clever, but the duke looked dis-

pleased.

Mrs. Hogue joined them at that mo-

ment, saying:

"From the expression on your faces, I do believe Percival has been making one of his incorrigible remarks. val, you really are not fit to be in the same house with young girls. Come over here and talk to me a moment. I have something particular to tell

Betty drew a breath of relief when he had gone.

The next few days sped fast and the week's end soon came.

Mr. Drake and most of the others were to move on somewhere else, but

Betty was to remain at "Shroone" a few days longer, with the family. The girl knew she was hopelessly in love. Drake, too, saw it; but was not confident enough to speak. He was as honest with himself as with others. He had passed the great passion of his life, and now it was wonderful to feel that some one really loved him. His great admiration and respect for Betty made him realize his own possibilities as he had never done before. Her spiritual beauty was a revelation to him. A woman with such a face should be worshiped, not loved, he said to himself.

He grew to talk to her freely about himself, and Betty understood perfectly what was in his mind. He was fonder of her than of any one else, but he was not in love.

The evening before Henry Drake was to leave, he took Betty in to play billiards after tea. He delighted in teaching her the game. As they passed the post-table, he gathered up a handful of letters.

"Forgive me, if I glance over the envelopes. Bills, invitations, begging," he murmured, as he scanned the letters, surmising their contents. He paused to look hard at the last. It had a black border and was sealed with a big coronet. He turned it over in his fingers several times; then he pushed all the letters hurriedly into his pocket.

He played his game badly, and his pupil beat him. She suggested stopping after one game, to go up and rest before dinner, hoping he would detain her, but he only said, "You are right," and before she had left the room took out his letters to read.

When Betty came down to dinner that night, her face was transfigured. She was, for the first time, absolutely beautiful. She sat at the duke's left and listened attentively to his political views.

Betty carefully avoided Mr. Drake's eyes during dinner, but her task was difficult, for he never stopped looking at her for a moment. By the time he was eating his salad, he was con-

vinced that his first love was only a memory and that the dead ashes contained no hot cinders. He resolved to propose to Betty before he left, and while the fruit was being served he almost showed some feeling in his face. He took her into the conservatory as soon as he could after the men came in from smoking.

"Betty," he began, without any preliminary warning, "I never could lie to a woman. I have told you of my life and its disappointments and my buried love-affair. I recalled it to-night, as I have received a long letter from the Duchess of Acres, whom I have not seen or written to for six years—since she married and went to live in Ireland. I had heard her husband died a few weeks ago, and now she writes, asking me to meet her in London next week. wishes to see me for some reason. and if I can be of service to her I will: but I wish to tell her that I am engaged to the best and sweetest woman in the whole world—to you, Betty. May I tell her that I love you and wish you to become my wife?"

He caught her two little cold hands in his as he spoke.

She dropped her eyes, and the lids quivered nervously for a moment before she looked again into his face. "I am so afraid you think you are in love with me because—because—I remind you of her—the girl you were in love with, the Duchess of Acres," she said, faintly.

"It was so at first, dear. That drew me toward you; but then I grew to care for you for yourself. I waited to speak until I was perfectly sure, and I tell you honestly it was not because I felt I ought to propose to you." The girl shivered. He continued: "In the end, I think that the cruelest thing a man can do. I should even tell a woman if I were tired of her and wished my engagement broken."

"Would you, truly?"

"Yes. I should prefer a woman to do it with me, too. I have no reason to marry except for love. I loved once, and now—I worship." He bowed his head and kissed her hands, reverently.

"But I would rather be loved than

worshiped," she said, archly.

He laughed. "If a man worships a woman before he loves her, it is the seal for eternity."

Her head was close to his and the blood surged up to her face. He looked to see if they were unobserved. Then he kissed her.

"Betty, I can't tell you how I value that kiss; I feel that you never have touched a man's lips before. I shall never forget it."

"I have never been engaged before,"

she answered, simply.

"Now we are to be married. Bother it! I wish I did not have to leave here to-morrow. I have half a mind not to go to Lady Glyn-Thules's party, but I——"

"No," interrupted Betty; "go, at least for a while, until I get used to everything."

"But I am longing to announce

our marriage."

"Please don't. I am engaged to you on one condition; that is, if you bore me, in a few weeks, I shall tell you; and if I bore you, you will tell me."

Here they were interrupted by Mrs. Hogue and Percival Hutchins, who were trying to find two more people to act charades.

III

THE Duchess of Acres went very quietly to a little hotel in Curzon street, after her husband's funeral, with her five-year-old son and her baby. She had not been in London since her marriage, except for a few days at a time, when she wished to shop. The duke was always in poor health and never could stop there long, and she was not allowed to leave him. He hated traveling and they lived an isolated life on their estate in Ireland, and were always a little pinched for ready money.

He allowed her to entertain but very little, as he considered English society immoral. He was fond of his young wife; she had brought him an heir and a son for the army.

Before the flowers had time to blossom on her husband's grave, the duchess wrote Henry Drake and was keener to see him again in London than he knew.

Ivy, Duchess of Acres, had thoroughly enjoyed being called, "your grace," during those six years, but now she felt the need of other things.

She stood looking out of the window twenty minutes before he came. He was late. It was foggy and dark outside, and the street lamps were lighted.

There was a knock at the door, and Mr. Drake was announced. He felt his head swim for a moment, but said, carelessly, "London has given you rather a nasty welcome. It was a different sort of morning that we rode in the Row together—let me see, many years ago now—how many?"

He shook hands with her and looked about the room. She scanned his face, eagerly. His figure was superb now. He had seemed quite a boy when they parted. He was several shades darker, and his sun-burned mustache was much lighter than his hair.

It was pleasant for her to think that she had been the love of Henry Drake's life. She wished to bring him back, and was counting the weeks until she could indulge in a little mild gaiety. She longed to meet the prominent people of the day, and who could help her better than her old lover? Like many English women, she was betterlooking at twenty-six than she had been at twenty. The late duke had given her approval and affection, but never confidence and admiration; and now she was bent on getting the latter.

Drake sat down by the tea-table and watched the kettle boil; but he stole glances at her beautiful face.

Her figure had improved wonderfully; her head was set well back on her full, round throat, which was perhaps her greatest beauty, and she seldom covered it with more than a bit of lace and her matchless pearls. Motherhood had given her skin a richer bloom. She was a superb, domesticated animal now; a material duplicate of Betty Sturgis, without the young girl's spirituality.

He asked her about the children and Irish industries with an equal indifference, and listened to her rambling on about her life in her cheery, soft voice, and, although nothing very interesting was said, he was surprised to find it was after seven when he took up his hat and cane to leave.

"Are you going so soon?" she asked, plaintively, with a flattering accent on the last word. "You have told me nothing of yourself yet; but perhaps you are dining early, and I must not detain you."

"No," he answered, shaking out his gloves, "I am not dining anywhere; I only thought I had paid you rather a long call. Are you dining alone?"

She nodded. "Yes; will you stop and take your chances with me—roast fowl and swimming Brussels sprouts? Such thoroughly British food one gets here! But I don't mind, for the rooms are comfortable, and they all know me. Besides that, I am hard up." She shrugged her shoulders carelessly with the last remark, and even laughed a bit.

His eyes went over her again for an instant. She was one of those women who always look rich and luxurious. She was frank about her economies, however, which were less conspicuous than her debts. She talked on, and once touched on their past; but she saw that he drew back a little, as if even the memory hurt him. He enjoyed his bad dinner immensely and moved his place next to hers.

The room was full of the scent of the lilies at her breast. She had stirred the fire in his veins, and he realized he was not old enough to be happy in just being loved; he wanted to love. But did he love her? He asked himself the question, looking straight into her eyes. Before he had time to come to any mental conclusion, she said, laying her useless little hand timidly on his knee:

"Harry—may I call you that, as I used to?—you will be kind to me, won't you, now that I am all alone in the world and have no man to lean on? It is so hard for me, with two boys to bring up, and you will stop in to-morrow, if you can, about tea-time, like a dear?"

"Of course; but you don't mean me to go home yet, surely! It is not ten o'clock."

She blushed charmingly, and now she looked like Betty!

"Yes, Harry, you must go now, because I have to be massaged at ten o'clock, before I go to sleep. I am rather done up, after all I have been through. I quite forgot when I asked you to stop to dine that I was engaged—that I was to be massaged later. I am sure you won't mind; you are always so sympathetic! Go, now, dear, because I have to be ready promptly."

She rose and laid her hand in his. He felt he was dismissed, and said good night; but, as he passed out through the office, he thought he heard a very smart-looking man ask to be shown up to the Duchess of Acres's apartment. His back was turned, so he could not distinguish him. Possibly his ears had played him false. He walked home across Piccadilly and down St. James's street with his hat thoughtlessly pushed to the back of his head, his cane tucked under his arm and his hands shoved-deep into his pockets. He was suddenly surprised on finding himself at his rooms.

The Winter passed quickly. Betty made one or two more visits with her aunt and uncle, and enjoyed the season tremendously. She seldom saw Henry Drake, as he went about a great deal. He wrote her weekly letters, saying where he had been, but very little of whom he had seen.

Betty shared her secret with no one. She wished to be quite sure of Henry Drake, to make it easier for him to keep his word to her, in case he discovered he had not known his own mind. She had a morbid dread of be-

ing deceived by any man.

It was the last day of April now, and Mrs. Bryce had arranged a week-end party before going up to London. Henry Drake was invited.

"I think you rather like him, Betty," said her aunt, in her slow,

nasal tone.

"Yes, indeed," said the girl, frankly, best of all."

"Now, honey, don't get too interested, because he has been in love with a woman for more than seven years, and she is now a widow, and I hear he is with her almost all the time, and is probably going to marry her."

"I hope he does, if he loves her," answered Betty. "Do you know her, aunty? I don't see that he could do better than marry the Duchess of Acres. But she's a silly woman, I'm afraid, and would not appreciate him."

Betty closed her eyes. Mrs. Bryce did not notice her, for she was looking out of the window across the lawn and river.

The lovely Spring weather and the late twilight made it possible for the guests at Elm Court to saunter out of doors after tea. Betty and Henry Drake were the first to disappear behind the big rhododendron bushes in the garden. She tripped gaily along beside him, her long white gown rustling over the grass as she moved.

He talked to her of himself. Then he watched her quietly, as she told him all she had been doing. He noticed how ethereal she seemed, and how her golden curls nestled to the skin of her brow and neck, as if they loved it. Her eyes danced with the vitality of youth, and her lips trembled with the sensitiveness of love.

As Henry Drake wandered with her through the garden, he remembered the promise they had made to each other when they were at Elm Court many months before. He had said he would tell her, if his feeling toward her changed. He tried now to frame the words.

"You will forgive me, Betty," he began, slowly, "for appearing brutal; but—but—I don't love you as I feel I should—to marry you. I could marry you and make you happy, if you felt you needed me, but you are so different from other women, that I think I would only make you miserable, if I did not give you all I ought to give. Betty, have you ever stirred up cold ashes and found live cinders?—cinders that would burn your fingers? Do you understand me?"

He waited a moment for her everready sympathy. She raised her wonderful eyes to his face, and he saw that she understood; but she did not speak at once. The blossoms seemed to be listening for her answer. At last, when her lips moved, her voice sounded as if it came from some far-off world.

"Henry, I love you so much—and I wish you to be happy. I have all I ask for—your trust and friendship."

He bowed his head, and she continued, softly: "I am so grateful to you for coming to me and telling me—so grateful, Henry! It is much better than to have found it out too late!"

"Betty, you are an angel! I hate myself, and yet—oh, Betty!" emotion seemed to overcome him. They were both silent for a time, and then he said to her: "I have not asked Ivy to be my wife—yet. I feel sure she still cares for me, and she has shown me plainly that all I need is to ask for her love. But I could not speak to her, until I had asked your permission and your blessing on our marriage. don't quite know what my feeling is. I never miss her when I am away from her, and I do miss you, Betty. Yet when I am with her I want to possess I want her for my home, for my wife. I hate other men that hang about her, and yet I do not think my nature is really jealous. I don't really know what it is; I am only telling you what I feel, as if I were talking to myself."

"I understand, dear, perfectly," she murmured. "Go and win her now. Playing with dead ashes is dangerous, Henry. I only ask you not to tell her

-about me. But let me be a friend

to you, dear."

He took her hand for a moment, and they watched the sunset over the rhododendron bushes. "It looks like rain to-morrow," said Betty, suddenly.

"It looks like heaven," said Henry

Drake, absently.

IV

In another month, many people had come up to London. The Duchess of Acres had taken a small house in Bolton street, and, although she could not attend formal affairs, she enjoyed having two or three people drop in to dine or lunch; the old atmosphere of gaiety was a delight to her. She reveled in the passers-by staring at her as she drove in her victoria up and down Piccadilly and through the Park at six.

Henry Drake made an engagement to walk with Ivy in Hyde Park one morning, and determined to propose to her, be accepted and fix

their wedding day.

They watched the riders a while, leaned over the rails and talked to a few mutual friends, fed the pigeons and then settled themselves in penny chairs, a little back from the throng of people, under a sheltering tree. She traced her name in the gravel with the point of her parasol, and he lighted a cigarette.

"Ivy," he began, in a very serious tone, "Ivy, I want you to marry me."

But she laughed carelessly. "It wouldn't be decent—not for a long time; his people would be furious with me. You know I care for you, though, Harry, and you only."

"I know," he answered, simply.

"But you know what I mean. It would seem odd; poor, dear Snuffy

has not been dead a year."

"I am not trying to persuade you to marry me to-morrow; we could wait. Just promise me that you will—later."

She erased the "Ivy" again with her parasol, peevishly, and said: "Oh, Harry, you have no more sentiment than—I don't know what. This is not the time or place to talk of that sort of thing. I feel hot and commonplace; let us change the subject, just until we get out of the Park. Wait until we get home. By the way, I want to show you an anonymous letter I got about you. It rather amused me and put you in a new light."

With great difficulty, she extracted from the depths of her pocket a note, which she threw into his hands, and went on laboriously with her name, begun in a fresh bit of gravel.

He leaned forward to read it.

MY DEAR IVY:

I appreciate all your kindness and offers, but I don't think you had better count on me, as I am afraid I am not a marrying man. However, I will let you know definitely in a few days. I am ambitious and selfish, as you know. I value the high esteem in which you hold me, but I think you had better link your life with Drake. It will be a less stormy career than a life with me, and, although I think him a bore, he has fine qualities and his place does not need repairs, as mine does. My wife must have a bottomless purse, unless she is a tinker, gardener and plumber combined. Plowton Hall is leaking everywhere, and just being a duchess will not stop water from trickling in. You are a great darling, but we had better simply keep on as we are now. Your bien devoue,

PERCIVAL HUTCHINS.

For a moment Henry Drake thought all the people were riding upside down. The duchess did not remember that she had slipped two notes in her pocket. He folded the letter deliberately and handed it back to her without any change of expression. She spoke first.

"Do you believe the woman with the blue eyes was the one you were supposed to love, or the black-eyed one, with the green hat? It is a killing letter, I think. You, of all people, Harry, who are so proper!

How I have laughed at it!"

"Oh, the black-eyed one in the green hat is rather more my style,"

he answered, mechanically.

"That's what I thought. I know the man who wrote the letter me that one and tried to make



miserable. But why did he not sign

his name, do you suppose?"

Henry Drake was looking vacantly across the Serpentine, and did not answer.

"Don't look so blank, Harry. Why do you suppose he did not sign his name?"

"Forgot, I suppose," he answered, vaguely.

"Forgot his own name! Really, you are odd to-day. Come, let us walk back to the house."

When they arrived at her door in Bolton street, he looked at his watch and said he did not have time to go in, because he was lunching at one. So they parted, and she wondered at the strange friends he had who lunched at that hour.



A MYSTERY

HIS mouth was large and his nose not straight, His eyes were a washed-out blue, His ears stuck far from a pear-like pate, His hair was a carroty hue.

An insignificant, gimerack man, Comical, quaint, outré, Built on a wondrously homely plan From the odds and ends of clay.

And the people mocked, but—Love took part,
The mischievous, kindly elf,
And threw a glamour by subtle art
Known just to his cunning self.
Then, sudden, a woman, regal, tall,
Sprang close to the scarecrow's side—
"Indeed, he's the handsomest man of all
In the whole, whole world!" she cried.

EDWIN L. SABIN.



UNINTERESTING

MISS SUMMIT—Did you have a nice time abroad?
MISS PALISADE—No. I was with a man who did nothing all the time but study his guide-book and talk about the places we were in.



A POOR SHOW

"HOW was the funeral?"
"Oh, nothing to brag of. They never were much."

THE STARVELING

A TRAGEDY AFTER MAETERLINCK

By William C. de Mille

CHARACTERS:

THORON, Count of Lachmia.

LAMBERT, his friend.

PHILMA, wife of Thoron.

BROLLO, a child, son of Thoron and Philma.

THREE ARMLESS MEN.

CENE I—A rocky pass in the mountains. At centre of stage a huge rock rises into the air. On one side of the stage the sun is shining brightly; on the other it is night and a thunderstorm is raging. Enter THORON and LAMBERT.

THORON

Good-bye, Lambert. Remember, I leave my wife in your care.

LAMBERT

Have you no fear, Thoron?

THORON

Nay; do I not know all?

LAMBERT

All—save one thing.

THORON

Do not speak it here. The thunder will drown your voice.

LAMBERT

Come into the sunshine. (They cross into the light.)

THORON

Now, speak.

LAMBERT

Nay; in the light I have forgotten what I wished to say.

THORON

Then, once more, farewell!

LAMBERT

When do you return?

THORON

I come when I am needed.

LAMBERT

The new moon is still young.

CURTAIN

Scene II—A gloomy hall in a castle. A single light burns before the fireplace and makes the walls look blood-stained. Philma, seated on a stool, is mixing food in a bowl shaped like a skull, and rocking a cradle in which Brollo is sleeping.

PHILMA (crooning)

A blood-red drink from a purple stream, A shriek of fear from a maniac's dream; A sob of pain from a voiceless child, A moan of woe from a maid beguiled. So sleep, my son, on your bed of crime, Death is about you—oh, wake in time!

Enter LAMBERT through a dark passageway. PHILMA shrieks with fear and seizes a knife.

PHILMA

Back! back! back! If you touch me, I will kill the child!

LAMBERT

Philma, you are standing between me and the light.

PHILMA

Oh, oh! I thought you were my husband.

LAMBERT

Nay; he has not returned. But how does the child?

PHILMA

He will not eat. His face is turning blue. I fear he is not well.

LAMBERT

You offered him good food?

PHILMA

He never eats when Thoron is away.

LAMBERT

Thoron has been absent many days.

PHILMA

If he does not come back soon, the child will starve to death.

LAMBERT

Let me help you with his broth.

PHILMA (screaming)

No, no, no, no! If you touch his food he will die at once.

LAMBERT (going to window at back)

The moon has risen over the lake. Look how the wavelets kiss the shore.

PHILMA

Ah, the waves! the waves! How cold the firelight seems!

LAMBERT

It seems cold because you have seen the moon.

CURTAIN

Scene III—A cove by the sea. On the sand near the front, three armless old men are sitting.

FIRST OLD MAN

The sea is rising. Soon it will fill the cove.

SECOND OLD MAN

We have no arms; we cannot swim.

THIRD OLD MAN

We shall all be drowned.

OLD MEN (together, beating the sand with their feet)

The sea, the sea! It rises, we have no arms—no arms!

Enter PHILMA, leading in BROLLO.

PHILMA (to FIRST OLD MAN)

This is my lawful child. He will not eat. His father is away.

FIRST OLD MAN

I cannot feed him; I have no arms.

PHILMA (to SECOND OLD MAN)

My child! my child! If he does not eat he will die.

SECOND OLD MAN

My hands are buried 'neath the golden sands. I cannot feed your child.

PHILMA (to THIRD OLD MAN)

Look, look! His face is blue. He has green spots on his eyes. Do you not see? He is dying.

THIRD OLD MAN

I have no hands. I see; I cannot feel.

PHILMA

The sea is rising.

OLD MEN

Rising, rising! No arms! no arms!

BROLLO

Oh, mamma, I see a fish! He is in the water. He is swimming to a rock. Oh, oh, look! look! look! The rock is chasing the fish. Oh, the scales! the scales!

PHILMA

Come, Brollo. Lambert is waiting for us.

BROLLO (crying)

Oh, oh, oh! He will kill me. He will not let me eat.

PHILMA

Brollo, you must not say that. You are not strong enough to believe it.

BROLLO

Oh, oh! I feel sick.

OLD MEN

The sea is rising. No arms! no arms!

CURTAIN

Scene IV—A bedroom. The corpse of Brollo is on the bed. Two candles shed a lurid light on its face. Philma is on her knees, sobbing. Lambert is nailing together a little coffin

PHILMA

Oh, oh, he is dead, dead! He would not eat, and he is dead.

LAMBERT

The coffin is finished. I made it all myself.

Enter THORON.

PHILMA

Too late! too late! You should have come before. If you had been here, he would have eaten. But he is dead. Too late! too late! too late!

THORON

What did you do with the food?

PHILMA

It rotted as soon as you had gone. Oh, the worms! the worms! Oh, oh!

LAMBERT

See, Thoron, how quickly I have made a coffin for your child!

THORON

You have starved my son.

PHILMA

No, no, no! It is not true. He would not eat.

THORON (drawing his sword)

You must die.

PHILMA (screaming)

Oh, oh! I did not! I did not! He would not eat!

THORON (killing her)

Make the coffin large enough for two.

LAMBERT

I cannot. You have done wrong to kill her. She did not starve the child; I poisoned his food before you went away. (Beats his brains out with a hammer, and dies.)

THORON

Perhaps I have been too hasty. I should have washed the cup.

OLD MEN (outside)

Help! help! We drown! Oh, the sea! No arms! no arms!

THORON

Oh, oh, oh! Too late! too late! (Goes mad.)

CURTAIN



AN INDICATION

⁶⁶OH, Amy, I'm just certain that Charley is almost ready to propose to me!" chirped Mabel.

"How do you know? Has he told you he loves you?" asked Amy.

"Not in so many words, but practically so. He acknowledged that he was fond of the good, the true and the beautiful."

THE HOUSEMAID

SHY, innocent, and fair of face
Showing a figure full of grace,
She moves about from morn till night
With footsteps ever swift and light,
And never lifts her violet eyes
Save when my questions seek replies.

Ah, what if I should dare to break A silence kept for custom's sake, And change that simple cotton gown For one of silk, to daze the town, And in those clear eyes claim the right To seek for depths of new delight?

Then might I hope for love and truth, That should renew a burnt-out youth. Shall I so venture, or is she More happy now than she would be If rich and idle?—who can tell? Not I, who only wish her well!

No, Mary, dear, I'll not tempt fate; And you shall keep your simpler state. A charming maid, you well might be A charming lady; but, ah, me! I might desire the maid again, And you would be the mistress then!

FRANK ROE BATCHELDER.



A MAN OF PRINCIPLE

INKSLING—Dashaway has an extremely delicate sense of honor.
PUSHQUILL—Honor? Didn't he run away with his friend Blinker's wife?
"Yes; but he refused absolutely to rob Blinker of his five children."



WHERE IT ORIGINATED

ROBBINS—I didn't think you had any idea of marrying the widow. NEWLYWED—I didn't; it was an idea of hers.

A PRODUCT OF MODERNITY

By Emery Pottle

To whatever vantage point our philosophy may lead us, it is never proof against the almost universal effect our absences have upon our friends—or, rather, the lack of effect. A bad reputation in New York is worth, according to many excellent authorities, two good ones in Brooklyn. This deduction arises from application of a trite old proverb, declaring that out of sight is out of mind.

When Penfield Wilkins walked down the gang-plank of the ship which had borne him from South Africa back to America, there was mingled with his natural pious gratitude for a safe and prosperous return an unreasonable sense of resentment over the fact that no bands played turbulent welcome, no friends gathered beamingly about him, with fervent, ineffectual questions on his state of health, and, indeed, that no one seemed at all glad to see him back.

To be sure, as he rather fretfully admitted, when he had finished with the customs officers and was seated in a cab on his way to an up-town hotel, he had not told any one he was coming home. That, undoubtedly, might account for it.

A fine, impalpable Autumn mist glistened in the air. Wilkins pushed back the cab window and let the raw damp settle over him in tiny pearls. The Avenue stretched out before him, gray and drearily respectable—its uncertain perspective more than ever indefinite. An ambulance clattered past him, its gong clanging with ostentatious warning.

"Poor devil in there!" said Penfield Wilkins. "Wonder if you hate that bell as I do? They'll forget you, too, will the crowd, as soon as the driver stops beating that infernal gong."

At Thirty-fourth street he passed Whitestone. "Hallo, Whitestone!" he called; "hallo, old man!" Whitestone stopped, instantly. He liked to be hailed by people passing in hansoms. He made his way to the curb.

"How are you, Wilkins?" he inquired, easily. "Where are you going?"

Penfield looked at him crossly for a moment; then he smiled.

"Oh, up-town, thanks. Just got home. Don't let me keep you. Thought I'd say 'hallo!'"

"Awfully nice of you," Whitestone replied. "I haven't seen you for an age. Been away long?"

"Go on, driver. Oh, no—just a week or two. See you again," Wilkins called back, in suave wrath.

"Awful ass, that man Whitestone."
And this foregoing incident would seem to disprove the antique contention that in absence any one's heart grows fonder.

That afternoon, at Euphemia Van Corliss's tea hour, Whitestone, in the lucid intervals of flirting with Mrs. Macpherson, announced that he had seen Penfield Wilkins on the Avenue. Elizabeth Grant Torrington, who was about to go, sat down abruptly at the news.

"He was evidently getting back from somewhere," Whitestone pertinently concluded.

There were half a dozen languid

conjectures as to where Penfield Wilkins could have been.

"He's not been seen anywhere for

ever so long."

"No; and he used to be everywhere."

"My dear, somewhere I heard he's been away a year and a half, at least."

Whitestone resumed his whispering with Mrs. Macpherson.

Miss Torrington again rose to de-

part.

Euphemia Van Corliss, on whom Miss Torrington's sudden nervousness of a moment ago had not been lost,

smiled on her sweetly.

"Going, Elizabeth, so early? Do have another cup—you'll need it; it's so nasty out, too. Isn't it nice to have Penfield Wilkins back? He was so clever and amusing! I always told Van so. My dear, where has he been? Of course, you know."

That high, clear tone of Euphemia's and the round stress of accent on the "you" betokened a challenge to the fray. Every one sat up in interested silence. Mrs. Van Corliss could let well enough alone with comparative comfort; but to stir up bad enough was a delight never to be foregone.

Elizabeth Torrington looked at her calmly, with her clear, brown eyes.

"Dear Euphemia, you can't have forgotten; you never forget anything, you always say. Penfield Wilkins went to South Africa some eighteen months ago. I'm sure I don't know why. Perhaps Miss Wilson can tell—she knew him so very well. Goodbye."

Miss Torrington departed in a pleas-

ant swish of silk petticoat.

Lucy Wilson, who had been talking to Van Corliss about the tragically precarious life of women in society and the bitterness of female existence in general—Van Corliss was the only man she knew who took her seriously, and he did not know how not to—made a movement with her lips which, to a lip-reader, must have spelled c-a-t.

Thankfully hailing a diversion, Van Corliss said, heartily, "That's so, Miss Wilson. I remember you knew Wil-

kins awfully well once, didn't you?" Then, having put his foot in it, he proceeded to execute a pirouette and inquired closely of her why and when Wilkins had departed.

As a matter of fact, Miss Wilson knew nothing of why Penfield Wilkins had gone to South Africa. But that was of little moment. The truth to her was always like a bad child—to be

shaken and put out of sight.

"My opinion is," said she, in positive tones, "that Elizabeth Grant Torrington made a fool of him and then threw him over, which is just what you might expect." She sat back to observe the effect of her remark. Corliss smiled. "Indeed, Van Corliss, I don't know why you smile. 'Twas serious at the time. I frequently warned him against her. The Child—as we used to call him—paid no attention. On the day he sailed for Africa, he came to me and said, 'Lucy, you were right; I think you're always right. Now I'm off to forget.' And since then she has jilted John Holland."

In the varnished talk that followed, Euphemia Van Corliss displayed a somewhat similar knowledge of the situation between Wilkins and Elizabeth Torrington. There are no two things like love-affairs and death to beget gratuitous biography.

As they were going down in the lift, Lucy Wilson remarked to White-stone with resigned triteness—apropos of Penfield Wilkins—"Evil communications corrupt good manners,

Whitestone."

To which he responded, vaguely, but with witty intention, "Yes, but how they improve bad ones!"

Miss Wilson merely sniffed.

It was nearly ten o'clock of the morning following Penfield Wilkins's arrival. He sat in his room before a small fire, finishing his roll and coffee, and staring at a newspaper. Presently he crumpled the paper in a ball and tossed it on the coals. "That for you!" he said, briefly. Wrapping his dressing-gown about him, he went to a

window. The day was clear—with a gray-blue, newly-washed look. "So, I begin it all over again, do I? Shall I be the Child, the young Child Wilkins, or—?" He shrugged his shoulders. "Well, well, there's time enough for that. A new day is sufficient for the evil—or the good—I can find in it. I will go forth."

A servant at that moment brought him a letter. It read:

DEAR OLD PEN:

Meet me to-day at eleven, at the Seventysecond-street entrance of the Park. I must talk to you. I don't know what you are now—you've been silent and away so long but you used to understand. Please come. ELIZABETH.

Wilkins held the letter in his hand a long time after he had read it. He laid it before him as he dressed, and he smiled frequently at the blue pages and illegible writing. What he was thinking is entirely a matter of conjecture, though once he tore the note sharply in two; later he put the torn pieces in the breast-pocket of his coat.

Elizabeth was waiting impatiently at the Park gate; as he appeared, she scanned him hurriedly, nervously. The old smile spread infectiously over Wilkins's face.

"Oh, Pen, I'm so glad it's you! I was afraid it might be some one else come back to me—to us, I mean. You've been gone so long and you've never sent me—or any one, a word." She seized his outstretched hands, eagerly. "And you're older—and browner—and—and——"

"Wiser, let us say, Elizabeth." Penfield's eyes rested contentedly on her—on the golden brown of her velvet gown, on her brown furs, on her heightened color and on her handsome face. He drew a sigh of profound satisfaction, not unmingled with regret. "Elizabeth, you are delightful, simply delightful. It would be worth coming back from Paradise to see you as you are this morning. Indeed, Elizabeth, I believe when I see you that Paradise is a much exaggerated place."

"Tell me about yourself, Penfield," responded Elizabeth, hurriedly.

"I cannot, really. I've been trying to tell you about myself for—oh, numbers of years, but I can't. You tell about myself." Her presence put him in a good humor.

"Oh, Penfield! Please be serious to-day. I—don't think I can quite bear anything else. I—" She stopped, suddenly, and looked away to the forlorn skeletons of the trees.

Wilkins glanced at her curiously for a moment, half-inclined to doubt her word. He dropped his eyes from her face, for there were tears on her lashes.

Laying his hand on hers for a moment, Penfield Wilkins said, gently: "We'll talk it over by-and-bye, Elizabeth. Now I'm going to bore you to death with South African experiences. Let's go down this path." If he felt a quivering desire to hold her close in his arms, nothing of it appeared in his manner. After all, a year and a half of absence and a new country are not without value as a finishing school or a school for new beginning. As he talked, Miss Torrington listened, absently. By the time they had come to the obelisk, she had learned nothing of South Africa, but she had regained her self-control.

"Listen, Penfield," she began, quite calmly; "do you remember our last night together—the night we drove in the cab, and I—you let me talk to you? and you were so nice and gentle—the night before I went away for the Summer?"

Wilkins answered, quite steadily. It seemed to Elizabeth that his voice had grown, like himself, richer, serener, older.

"I remember it, perfectly. In some unaccountable way, I broke my pet stick that night. And you told me of your engagement to John Holland. Is it—are you—er—when is the wedding, Elizabeth?"

"What have you heard?" she demanded, fiercely. The tragic sound of her voice recalled her sense of humor.

"You can't have heard anything so

soon. Isn't that like us moderns, to inquire instantly from whom the gossip comes? Intuitions, friendly solicitations, the most normal interest—it all has to meet that search-light question, 'Who told you?'"

"Julie Wilbur used to say, rather liberally—it was the one mot she indulged in—that everybody sees everything, everybody tells everything,

and everybody—forgets everything, laughed Penfield.

Elizabeth seized the last words.

"Forgets everything—forgets! they? I wish-I pray-they do."

She stopped to pick up a dried, rainstained leaf. It crumbled in her hands almost to dust. "Like that," she continued, flinging away the brown

particles.

"You have stained your gloves," Wilkins said, quietly. Her face flushed and she gave him a reproachful look, but he did not seem to notice it. They continued their walk.

"Penfield, I am going to marry

General Higginson."

His response—long in coming—was not illuminating, though even and polite in tone. "Ah!"

A breathlessness came into her throat, and with it a burning desirelike a physical tingling at her fingers' ends—to tell, tell all, and tell as quickly and as baldly as possible. There is no withholding in a woman's confidence, once she gives it. sheer relief of utterance and the fascination of laying bare the most sacred, or the most unholy, sweep her tumultuously from the moorings of reserve.

"Oh, I know what you think of me! I know you think I am heartless and and — and — indecent; cold-blooded and perhaps I am. But, oh, Penfield, dear Penfield, if you could once realize, see my position, understand me! Oh, try, Pen, try to—it's so hard!" She clasped her hands about his arm,

in a weak desire for help.

"What of Holland, dear friend?"

asked Wilkins, gently.

"Pen, I love him. I love him too well. I care for him so much that I dare not give myself into his keeping.

He is so—so—good! so honestly, masculinely good! and so tender! that's a wonderful and a rare quality in any man, Penfield—and—and so immaculate in his thoughts and in his life and in his ideas of women! He has so much to give, and it is so unsullied! He is—to use an abused and weak word—pure."

Penfield paused, involuntarily, and

gazed at her in wonder.

"Elizabeth! I never knew you cared for that sort of thing in a man. I've heard you laugh and joke most ridiculously about some chap who happened to bear such a reputation of white spotlessness. I thought you wanted men to have had their apprenticeship at—at the world—or, if you like, women."

She turned to him a face in which quivered reproach, regret and a pa-

thetic amusement.

"Oh, you silly, silly boy! Don't you know-haven't you learned, after all, that that very quality of clean-

ness is dearest to all women?

"Let me tell you all of it," she con-"I said a moment ago that I loved him too well to give myself into his keeping. And the reason is oh, it's horrid to say it—money. I met him and loved him, and I love him yet. A year ago, Pen, you know I was, comparatively, a rich woman. At any rate, I had enough for myself, and no one was dependent on me. Perhaps I never told you that, when I was twenty, papa lost all his money. I knew what it was to be poor. pinched and starved and worked for three years. Oh, how I hated it! Every moment was dust and ashes to me—though I didn't complain. Then we made money again. Papa put through some great business thing before he died-I never understood what—and we were rich. But the thought of those three years is like a frightful dream-don't laugh at me-I can't bear being poor. Since then I've always had twelve thousand a year income, until two months ago something happened; and it's gone down to three. It scares me. I've

been spending every cent of that twelve thousand for myself-on myself and my life. There was enough for John and me once, but nowforgive me, Pen, but he earns very little. His plays-well, the public doesn't want them; they seem good, but it's always the same story: 'Not quite what we want; try another.' I'm a woman of expensive habits; I can't change—I daren't be poor—oh, Pen, Pen!— And he's so good to me and so noble!" She brushed away the tears from her eyes and talked on, rapidly, convulsively. "Ten years ago I could have put my hand in his, and said, 'John, let's try it together; let's eat off a bare deal table, if need be. and I'll scrub it white with my own hands.' Now I've had my lean years; I'm a woman of thirty—and I know myself, my feelings, my little tempers, my nasty moods, my great, unforgettable desire for results, position —God forgive me!—and the comfort money can buy. And I mustn't marry him, feeling like this. I mustn't put the burden of my regret on his shoulders, must I, Pen? Must I? Must I?" She trembled, violently, and flung her questions at him, with the hysterical emotion of a woman who must be convinced of her own wisdom. don't answer. I'll be all right in a moment—only, I so want to be fair and just. You think I am exaggerating the situation? or that this love of mine is not the highest type of loving? Well, suppose it isn't. I can never care more for any one else. field, can't you see the reason? I am a product of modern civilization. New York has made me what I am. Don't think that I do not realize how much I am missing in love that others may find—the romance, the poetry, the devotion that goes through lakes of fire and climbs mountains of ice, the great hungry desire— Oh, I almost flagellate myself at night, to think I shall never, perhaps, know the Great Real Thing. But—I always come back to that 'but'—I dare not marry John Holland." Out of sheer weariness, she sank down on a bench.

Wilkins's face was white and drawn. It is a terrible thing to see a woman's heart. "What does Holland say?" He asked this because he could think of nothing else that he could put into words.

"We talked it all over—and I think—I know—he agrees—at least, he says I must do as I think best. And that's another evidence of modern We sat one day and, training. calmly, perfectly dispassionately, discussed the whole affair. Afterward, it was as if some one had died: such a curious goneness in everything! Penfield, we know too much, we feel too much, and we analyze too much. wish I could wash my mind as clear and clean as this day after the rain, and begin again-loving and living in some simple, old-world garden, in some gentle house of the heart, out where the wide spaces of night, the breath of the fields, the flash of a bird's wing, the sun through the green woods, are the materials for a year's delight. Ah! I'm sorry to make you share my burdens. You ought to be happy, Pen, now you are home again." She smiled, wearily.

He looked at her, soberly. For some reason he could not answer.

"And then General Higginson came"—they were walking again, now, languidly and heavy-footed—"and asked me to marry him, and—I'm to tell him to-day—give him my answer. It will be—what? No, I don't love him—he's rich, yes—I shall say——"

"You will say, 'yes,' Elizabeth, won't you?" asked Wilkins, dully. Some old-fashioned, homely sentiment struggled within him. He wanted to cry out, to denounce her arguments, to bid her go to Holland, have him hold her arms and take the strength of her heart, her life, let her weep her foolish fears out on his breast. And he, Penfield Wilkins, had thought he was old in heart. Ah, he was young, young compared to these modern There must be romance in lovers. life, there must be dreams still. vet, he could not find the words to tell her this—it seemed like childish reiteration of something learned ages ago. She was right. She could not marry Holland. She must give him up.

"Good God, the pity!" The words broke from him against his will. There were tears in his eyes. "Oh, Elizabeth, Elizabeth, the pity, the pity! Poor girl! And poor old Holland, poor chap! It must be wrong; I know it's wrong. Great God! and I can't find the reason why it is wrong; I can't tell you not to do it because I don't know how—I don't know how!"

She turned on him, quietly. "You understand. I knew you would. may be wrong to give up John Holland, but I can find no reason why it is so. I am what the world has made me-either prudent, or sensible, or grossly selfish—I am not sure." With swift passion—the sudden storm on a treacherously calm lake—she threw herself on Wilkins.

"Pen, Pen," she whispered, love him! I love him! Tell me to marry him—tell me I'm wrong—tell me-tell-tell me! "

"Beth"-he used the tender diminu-

tive for the second time in his life-"Beth, I cannot tell you."

Elizabeth Torrington's eyes sought his, with a strange, helpless sorrow.

"No," she answered, harshly; "no, you cannot."

They stood together a moment. After the fashion of two people who have come to the end of an exhausting emotional scene, they vaguely wondered what they should do next. Park was quite deserted. Penfield Wilkins bent reverently and kissed her.

Little more was said.

"The general comes at five to-day for his answer," Elizabeth said, as they parted.

"Holland?" Wilkins could not "He sailed yesterday for London."

hold back the question.

"Who's celebrating to-night?" asked Wilkins of a waiter at the club The sound of much that evening. laughter and jovial cork-popping was issuing lightly from some inner room.

"General Higginson, sir."

"Ah!"



FROM LOVE'S BOOK

OVE dreams and lowly murmurs in his sleep. With what strange secret do I vigil keep-What slumbering passion of long-buried days? I veil my face in Love's long hair, and weep!

The lark is singing, and my Love still sleeps. The rosy light of morning slowly creeps Along the marble beauty of his face— Who knows this hour knows Love's sublimest deeps.

So still is Love he hears the farthest sound; The footfalls of the seasons in their round, The far-off whisper of the rhyming spheres, The murmur of the still things underground.

ELSA BARKER.



GOOD liar is better company than a truthful man with an impediment in his speech.

THE MOOD OF VICTORY

By Kate Masterson

HE threw down her embroidery, and took up a novel. But, after a few pages, she found her mind wandering from the lines she was reading. She was thinking, again, of him. And he had left for Washington a week ago without a word. Since then she had moped. Afternoons she had been religiously out when people called. She looked at the cards and wondered how people could live such aimless lives. And always the same ones! His card was not among them. He had high ideals of things. He believed, he once told her, that politics could be made pure. She did not know in the least what he meant by this, but she liked to hear him talk in that way. All the others talked ping-pong. That was too easy.

She tossed the novel over to the other side of the room, went to the piano and began to play something that was open on the rack—Chopin. It sounded so weird that she tried it with one finger backward, and it sounded much better. Then the seamstress came in to pin linings on her, and she had to stand with her hands over her head, until she felt hysterical.

Clothes—clothes—clothes! Always clothes! For what? Nothing! Always dressing for this and dressing for that, as though it were an object. What an empty life it was! Nothing real or earnest about it! Sometimes, she thought she would like to be a nun! Or a nurse—a hospital nurse during a war! He had gone to the war. Of course! He was that kind. He could never. never care for her! Why, she asked him if he played golf one day, and he told her, with a curl of his lip, that he thought there was something more in life than golf!

There was! there was! And she, and others like her, had found it! It was ping-pong! Ha! ha! She laughed so discordantly that Foo Foo, the Japanese poodle, woke up and looked anxiously at her.

She went to a shelf and picked up a book in a soft, gray leather cover, with the name in gold—"In Tune with the Infinite." It was a book of his. The book-plate had a Latin motto—she had not the slightest idea what it meant. It was so like him to have a book-plate that no one could understand! She turned the pages, and a verse caught her eye:

"Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me.
No wind can drive my bark astray
Nor change the tide of destiny.

"The stars come nightly to the sky,
The tidal wave unto the sea;
Nor time nor space nor deep nor high
Can keep my own away from me!"

Rather pretty that was, she thought. She read on: "In the degree that we recognize our own inferior powers, then we are rulers and able to dictate; in the degree that we fail to recognize them, we are slaves. The whole of human life is cause and effect: there is no such thing as chance. Are we not satisfied? Then the thing to do is not to spend time railing against the imaginary something we create and call That will come which we cause to come. We invite whatever comes. and, did we not invite it, either consciously or unconsciously, it could not, and it would not, come."

This was the sort of thing he read, she supposed, and understood. "We invite whatever comes." Now, what did that mean, for instance? "We invite——"

Just then the maid came in, with a fluff of pink over her arm. "It is finished, mademoiselle," she said; "you

will try it for the last time?"

"Again?" said mademoiselle, crossly, wrinkling her brows. She put the book, open, face down on a cushion. The maid slipped the new gown over mademoiselle's head. She murmured ecstatically in French as she hooked. The shimmering silk, sea-shell in its hue, fell fluttering around mademoiselle from her throat to the carpet, in exquisite lines. Through the sleeves, set in with arabesques of creamy lace, she saw the glimmer of her arms. Her head poised itself as she looked in the A light had begun to glow in mirror. her eyes. She knotted the two great sashes of lace at her bosom, and the ends just reached the floor. She turned and looked in the mirror, over her shoulder. The maid handed her a small hand-glass. She wriggled her back slightly, so that the train would spread out.

"Isn't—it—too long?" she said. Her voice had grown soft as velvet. Her lips had begun to smile slightly.

"Only three yards," said the maid.

"It's simply lovely!"

"It is very good," mademoiselle said; better than I thought! Let me see it with the candles. Light them—yes—light them all! Draw the curtains. What time is it? Four o'clock? So late! Just light the lamp under the kettle, Marie."

"And mademoiselle is not home, as

usual, if any one calls?"

Mademoiselle fluffed out the lace sash. "I—I didn't say so, Marie. Yes; I'm at home. What's the use of moping? I'm in the world, and I must live in it! I've got to stay in, if I wish to play! What do I care? Is my hair all right in the back?"

The maid looked at her in surprise. "Yes, mademoiselle," she said. Foo Foo sat up and looked deeply interested. A bell tinkled somewhere. She picked up the book with the gray cover. A trim servant came in with a florist's box and a card—it was his. She touched her hair once or twice with her fingers, and smiled mockingly at him as she saw him in the doorway.



REASSURING

OH, Miss Van Amsterdam," ejaculated little Mrs. Montgomery, who had called to see about getting up the charades and tableaux for the church entertainment, "you just must help us. We want somebody to be Cleopatra, and you will be just the very one."

"But my dear Mrs. Montgomery," replied Miss Van Amsterdam, archly, "I would not be a good selection for Cleopatra. Why, she was the most beau-

tiful woman of ancient times."

"Don't let that disturb you at all, my dear," replied the smiling little Mrs. Montgomery, reassuringly. And with that graceful tact for which she is so noted, she added: "Don't let that disturb you at all. These tableaux and charades will be merely burlesques, you know."

CHARLES NEWTON HOOD.



IT is hard to believe that a man is telling the truth when you know that you would lie, if you were in his place.

THE SPIRIT OF THE REED

By Bliss Carman

NCE I saw (O breath of Summer) in the azure prime of June,
When the Northland takes her joy and sets her Wintered life in tune,
The soft wind come down the river, where a heron slept at noon;

Stir the ripening meadow-grasses, lift the lily-pads, and stray Through the tall green ranks of rushes bowing to its ghostly sway; Then I heard it, like a whisper of the world, take voice and say:

"Mortal, by the woodwind's murmur and the whisper of the stream, I, who am the breath of grasses and the soul of Summer's dream, Once was Syrinx, whom a great god loved and lost and made the theme

Of his mournful minor music. Nay, I who had worn the guise Which allured him, yet eluded, vanishing before his eyes, When his heart held lonely commune, taking counsel to devise

Some new solace for sad lovers that should give the spirit vent, Lovelier than speech of mortals where the stricken soul is pent And the longing gropes for language large enough for beauty's bent;

When he drew the reeds and ranged them, rank by rank from low to shrill, Bound them with the flax together—I was inspiration still, I was heartache crying through them, I was echo on the hill.

And forever I am cadence, joyous, welling, sad or fond, When the breath of god or mortal, breaking time's primeval bond, Blows upon the mouths of wood and all the mellow throats respond.

Not a flute, but I have hidden in its haunted hollow mould; In the deep Sicilian twilight, when the shepherd piped to fold, I have been the eerie calling of the Pan pipes rude and old;

In the ivory monaulos, when the soft Egyptian stars Sentried Cleopatra's gardens, through the open window-bars I went forth, a splendid torment, o'er the dreaming nenuphars.

In the silver-mounted laurel played by some Byzantian boy, I was frenzy, when the throng night after night went mad for joy, As the dancer Theodora made the Emperor her toy.

In the boxwood bound with gold I drew my captives down the Nile To the love-feasts of Bubastis, lovers by the thousand file, Willing converts to my love-call, children of the changeless smile.

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Babylonian Mylitta heard me keep the limpid tune, When the lovers danced before her at the feast of the new moon, Till the rosy flowers of beauty through her sacred groves were strewn.

And Sidonian Astarte and the Asian Cypriote Knew the large, unhurried measure of my earth-sweet pagan rote, When the dancing youths before them followed me from note to note.

Where some lithe Bithinian flute-boy, nude and golden in the sun, Set his red mouth to the twin pipes, I was in each pause and run, When his manhood took the meaning of the love-notes one by one.

And amid the fields of iris by the blue Ionian sea, I was solemn-hearted sweetness and pure passion soon to be In the dark-haired little maid who piped her budding melody.

I was youth and love and rapture, I was madness in their veins, Calling through the heats of Summer, calling in the soft Spring rains, From the olive Phrygian hillsides and the deep Bœotian plains.

I but blew, and mortals followed; I but breathed, and they were glad; King and mendicant and sailor, courtesan and shepherd lad; For there is no creed nor canon laid on music's myriad.

Not a tribe nor race nor people born in darkest savagery, Dwellers in the Afric forest or the islands of the sea, But I wooed them from their war-drums—made them gentle—set them free.

Silence fell upon the tam-tams throbbing terror through the night, And the prayer-gongs ceased to conjure cowering villages with fright, When my cool note, clear as morning, called them to a new delight.

I, the breath of flute and oboe, golden wood and silver reed, Put away their fear, and taught them with my love-tone to give heed, When the love grew large within them, to the lovely spirit's need.

Henceforth no mere frantic rhythm of beating foot and patting hand, Nor monotonous marimba could suffice for soul's demand, When joy called her wayworn children and peace wandered through the land.

Love must build a better music than the strumming tambourine To ensphere his worlds of wonder, height and depth and space between, Pleasure-lands for Soul, the lover, to preëmpt as his demesne.

So he took the simple reed-note, as a dewdrop clear and round, Blew it (magic of creation!) to the tenuous profound Of sheer gladness, light and color of the universe of sound.

And there soars the shining structure, tone on tone as star on star, Spheres of knowledge and of beauty, where love's compensations are, And the plenitudes of spirit move to rhythm without a jar;

Every impulse in its orbit swinging to the utmost range Of the normal sweep of being, through unfathomed gulfs of change, Poised, unswerved, and never finding aught unlovely or unstrange. When some dark Peruvian lover set the love-flute to his lip, I was the new soft enchantment loosed upon the dusk, to slip Through the trees and thrill the loved one from warm nape to finger-tip;

Till she could not choose but follow where my player piped for her; So I roused the love within her, set the gypsy pulse astir, With my wild delicious pleading, strong as incense, fine as myrrh.

When for love the Winnebago took his courting-flute and played His wild theme for days together near the lodge door of his maid, I was ritual and rapture of the triumph he essayed.

And my brown Malayan lovers pierce the living gold bamboo, For the lone melodious accents of the wind to wander through, While my haunting spirit tells them many a secret old and true.

In the soft Sumatran pan-flute with its seven notes I plead; I am help to the Marquesan in his slender scarlet reed; From the immemorial East I draw my dark-eyed gypsy breed.

Chukma, Dyak, Mahalaka, Papuan and Ashanti, Hillmen from the Indian snows, canoemen from the Carib sea, Tribesmen from the world's twelve corners, at my whisper come to me—

All the garlanded earth-children in their gala bright array, Laughing like the leaves, or sighing like the grass-heads which I sway; For my lure is swift to lead them, and my solace strong to stay.

And the road must melt before them and their piping fill all lands, Till a new world at their fluting like a magic flower expands, And Soul's unexplored dominion is surrendered to their hands.

Did not I, the woodbreath, calling, make thy mortal pulses ring, And that old chinked barn, gray-weathered, with its dusty rafters sing? Was not I the long, sweet love-throb in the music-house of Spring?

Think how all the golden willows and the maples, crimson-keyed, Kept the rare appointed season, flowering at the instant need, When the wood-pipes give my summons and the marshy flutes were freed.

Love be, then, in every heart-beat, when the year comes round to June, And life reaches up to rapture, lingering on the perfect tune, As this evening in your valley silvered by the early moon."

Thus I heard the voice of Syrinx, by the dreamy river shore, Sift and cease, as one might pass through a large room and close the door; And I knew myself a stranger on this lovely earth no more.



SLOW WORK

GREAT AUTHOR—Yes, I wrote that book in fourteen days. FRIEND—Why the delay?

THE DREAM BEAUTIFUL

THOUGH full of care
I tread the round
Of toil in which man's eager life is bound,
I faint not 'neath the load I bear,
For, grievous though the burden sometimes be,
I dream of thee!

And when, at night,
I lie enwound
In silence that is sweeter than all sound,
And darkness, kindlier than light,
Shuts out the busy world awhile, and free,
I dream of thee!

Like to a breath
Of fragrance blown
From some shy blossom, hidden and alone,
Redeeming frost and Wintry death,
So ever comes, like scent of bloom to me,
My dream of thee!

Like to a star
Amidst the clouds,
When angry tempest hurtles in the shrouds,
And, darkling, drifts the mariner afar,
So, out of storm and shadow, beams on me
My dream of thee!

FLORENCE EARLE COATES.



IN A BAD WAY

"HEY are very poor, aren't they?"
"Awfully! So poor that they can't even run into debt."



ECONOMY

MRS. TODD—I don't feel as if I could afford to get a new gown to-day.

MRS. NODD—What are you going to do?

"Wait until to-morrow."

THE REJECTING OF CARTWRIGHT

By Temple Bailey

ARTWRIGHT had always believed in the blindness of love
—that is, of woman's love.
"If she loves you, she won't see your
faults," he had said, complacently.

He held this opinion until he met Edith Martine. Miss Martine was really very nice. Cartwright had decided that when he saw her on his first night at the Mountain House. She was small and fair and sympathetic, and she was a gentlewoman. Cartwright was discriminating. He often associated with girls who were not gentlewomen—sometimes he liked that kind best, but he knew the difference.

Cartwright was susceptible up to a certain point, but he did not intend to marry just yet. The resulting conflict between heart and head gave to his end-of-the-Summer partings just the effective tinge of sadness.

He worked through the usual first stages of Summer flirtation with Miss Martine, and things went smoothly until he discovered that she possessed an unyielding conscience.

"Please don't," she said, one night, when he tried to take her hand; "please don't." And her voice trembled.

"Why not?" asked Cartwright.

"It isn't right," she said; and, try as he might, Cartwright could not shake her decision.

He tried again, after three weeks of rather intimate acquaintance, with the same result.

"Don't you like it?" he asked, with a most effective use of his gray eyes.

Her face flamed. "What if I did? It wouldn't be right."

Cartwright laughed a satisfied laugh. At least, the blush had told him something.

"If we were engaged, would it be right?" he murmured, and tried to look into her eyes.

But she kept her lashes down, discreetly.

"Perhaps," she said, sedately.

A week later, she again called him to account. They had ridden from the Mountain House to the lake, and had stopped at a quaint road tavern. He had ordered lemonade for her, and something stronger for himself.

Then, when the waiter had gone, she touched his tall, cool glass with her finger.

"I wish you wouldn't," she said.
"Why not?" he asked, as before.

Again came her decision, "It isn't right."

"What a Puritan you are!" he said, irritated; "it won't hurt me."

She raised her eyes, and scrutinized his fine, cynical face.

"I could not marry a man who drank," she said.

Cartwright smiled at the implied warning. And he had not even asked

"That is very wise of you," he said, quietly.

For a little while, there was no sound but the tinkling of the ice against their glasses. The rustic pavilion in which they sat hung almost over the edge of a bluff. Looking off over the valley, they seemed to float in a wonderful sea of sunshine.

"I wish this might never end," said Cartwright, as he had said to many other girls, many other times; "but it will soon be over, and then the old

life, the old monotony."

The girl turned her face to him; her eyes shone. "No," she said, "never just the same, for I have known you, and you have known me."

Cartwright gasped, mentally. She was a queer combination of boldness and inexperience, he decided, and he

began to be interested.

"You won't forget me?" he asked,

softly.

The blue eyes met his honestly, like a child's. Somehow they made him uncomfortable.

"Oh, no," she said, "I sha'n't for-

get-you."

She rose and leaned over the railing. Cartwright went and stood beside her, towering far above her. For the first time in his life there came to him the feeling of the remoteness of the good woman. There had been girls who had smiled, girls who had blushed, girls who had protested, but no girl like this one with the dreamy, rapt face, that inspired in him a feeling of reverence.

He knew it was time to stop, but the passion of conquest was upon him. He bent his head down, close to hers. "Do you love me?" he breathed, and knew that, if he had been a true man, he would have stated his own feeling first.

With artistic appreciation, he watched the pink flush that traveled from the whiteness of her neck to the whiteness of her forehead. The blush and the trembling of her lips were the only signs of emotion that she showed.

"Oh," she said, "you must let me think it over. Marriage is such a serious thing. I must not decide now. I'll tell you this evening."

Marriage! Cartwright was in for it; but he had managed these things be-

fore.

He was waiting for her as she descended the broad stairway that night. Her blue gown was trailing after her. Cartwright liked her best in blue; it suited her ethereal type. Her hair was low on her white neck, and she looked very young and very pure

and very sweet. His fastidious taste was satisfied as he gazed up at her, and she blushed as she met the admiration in his eyes.

"You are perfect," he declared.

"No—oh, no!" she breathed, faintly.
"Too perfect," he said, "for such a man as I."

This was Cartwright's trump card. Women liked to be placed on a pedestal, he knew.

A little frown ruffled her forehead;

her eyes were troubled.

"I am afraid that is true," she said. Cartwright had not expected this. If she had said it with a laugh—but this calm judgment was not pleasant.

"Oh," he said, uncomfortably, "I am sorry you have such an opinion of

me."

"I'm sorry, too," she murmured, but she did not take back her words.

Then, with a wistful smile, she swept

away to the dining-room.

He decided that she was a little prig. She needed a lesson, and his conscience ceased to trouble him.

That evening, when the rest of the guests were dancing, he led her to a moon-lighted angle of the porch. He seated himself at her feet and looked up at her, with eyes that seemed to adore.

"Don't," she said.

Then, suddenly, she leaned down over him and spoke. In her voice there was an ineffable quality of mingled womanliness and childishness, that touched him strangely.

"I have been thinking," she said, "of all you said this afternoon. Perhaps I encouraged you to say such things to me. But—I really care for

VO11

Cartwright was silent and stricken in the knowledge conveyed by her confession.

"But it would never do," she went on, hopelessly. "You are a man of the world, and you do so many things that seem wrong to me." She laid her hand on his sleeve, as if to soften the hardness of her words. "And—I could not marry a man I could not look up to."

In the reaction, swift anger surged through him. On his lips were the words that would tell her that he had offered to her not the devotion of a lifetime, but the admiration of seven, or fourteen, or twenty-one days, as his vacation might extend.

"My dear girl-" he began, cut-

tingly, and stopped.

He simply could not do it. The small fingers had slipped down his coat sleeve, until they touched his hand; and at the touch all the shallow vanity in him turned to manhood. He wished—well, he could always win love. But respect? He had not thought of that.

"I am not good enough for you," he said, and was surprised to know that he really meant it.

Again the troubled frown ruffled her

forehead.

"Please don't think it's conceit," she pleaded.

"No," said Cartwright, steadily;

"It's simply self-preservation."

Then some one hunted them out and claimed her for a dance, and she went away. Cartwright sat and smoked far into the night.

"And I hadn't even asked her," he

said, at last.

But this time he said it with a sigh.



THE ONE DAY

TO think that to the world this night may seem
Only the hours 'twixt sunset-time and sleep—
This night, when love made real my dearest dream,
And gave it me to keep!

That others have not known this one white day, But let it pass like any other one, While, love-led, hand in hand, we found the way Into the Land of Sun!

O heart, dear heart, they have not seen nor known! But evermore this one day stands apart, Glad, rare and radiant—this one day alone, Deep shining in my heart!

CHARLES BUXTON GOING.



A DIFFERENCE

MRS. DE STYLE—My husband is always in for a good time.
MRS. GUNBUSTA—Mine is always out for his.



UP-TO-DATE

NODD—Have you had your yacht done over? TODD—Yes. Vintage of '49.

LOVE'S SHIELD

LOOK not beyond the obverse of the shield
Wherewith Lord Love, thy noble knight and mate,
Defends thee from the fell attacks of Fate.
Be it to thee a mystery, as sealed
As life or death; for its reverse revealed
Would, with its dread and sorrow, violate
Thy soul, and blind thee at God's very gate;
And Love, too, stricken, perish on the field.
For on its obverse disk it doth present,
Arrayed in heavenly investiture,
All images most beautiful and pure—
Truth, Hope, Faith, Peace, Joy, Constancy, Content.
But on its dark reverse, in vestures dire,
Medusa, and the Furies of Desire!

LORENZO Sosso.



HIS SAD CONDITION

You have, here in the village, one of the most peculiar lunatics that I have ever seen in my life," remarked the observant tourist from the North.

"Ah, yes," nonchalantly replied the landlord of the tavern at Polkville, Arkansas. "A chap with long, dankish-looking hair, a brow that bulges out like the back of a snapping-turtle, and a note-book and pencil everlastingly in his hand? He is peculiar, and no mistake; but he isn't a lunatic, exactly, although he does act like one. He is a writer from up in New England somewhere, who has come down here to study characters and local idiosyncrasies, as he calls them. No, he isn't exactly crazy, but he puts up a lifelike imitation of insanity at times!"

"Oh, that is not the person to whom I was referring," interrupted the tourist. "The man I have in mind is a thin, stooping, yellow-complexioned fellow, and his most marked peculiarity is that every now and then he suddenly jumps one way or the other out of the track he is pursuing, as if he feared there

were some great and imminent danger behind him."

"Oh, I know now who it is. That's Lab Ricketts, who has taken so much quinine for his ague that his ears ring all the time. Why, the other night he ran the whole length of the main street, yelling like mad, because he thought he heard the fire-bell clanging its clapper out, when it was only the ringing in his own head. And the day before yesterday he suddenly jumped out of the path into the creek, screaming, 'So, boss! So, boss!' at the top of his voice. He thought there was a mad cow with a bell on right behind him. Oh, yes; he does act somewhat peculiar."

THE LOVES OF ANNE

By the Baroness von Hutten

GHE is an angel, mother!" cried Anne, her small brown face aglow. "Per-fectly glorious."

"What is her name, do you know?"
Anne sat down and emptied the contents of her pocket into her blue ging-

ham lap.

"Her name?" she repeated, absently. "Oh, no; I don't know her name. But you should see her hair and her eyes and the way she walks—all wavy. Her elbows are too sweet for words." Absently still, she felt her own elbows, the childish sharpness of which was visible under the thin stuff.

Mrs. Orme laughed, as she often laughed at her daughter. "In a word, I suppose, another love," she said, after a pause, for she knew how Anne fell delightfully, girlishly in love with almost every woman she might see.

"M-m," assented Anne. "And Jimmy, the little boy—I never saw such a duck. He's four and wears sailor trousers—long—and a Leghorn hat with a red silk fisherman's cap on the crown. It flops in the most lamblike way."

"Will you be a duck and an angel and a lamb, and give me my drops? After which, out of philanthropy, you had better go out again, and I will take

my nap."

Anne counted out the drops, and

then went forth into the sun.

Westward over the hard, yellow sand she flew, her idea of taking a walk being to go as fast as possible. Yet her quick eyes noted everything—the broad billows of land to her right, sparsely covered with coarse sea-

grass; beyond, the level stretch of pine woods, and to her left the warm blue sea, blinking beneath the setting sun. Anne was just eighteen, and it was her first visit to Italy. It was a beautiful, wonderful world!

Suddenly a new joy was added to

the list.

Under a red umbrella sat a smartly dressed nurse-maid, and by her the lovely little boy was digging holes in the glistening sand.

"Oh, you darling," cried Anne,

"may I help dig?"

"Have you got a spade?" answered

the child, gravely.

"Fi donc, Monsieur Jeemie! Say, 'yes,' nice to the young lady." The nurse was reading Le fournal pour Rire, and hailed Anne's advent with pleasure.

The next morning Anne explored the little town, making two dear friends en route—a very old fisherman and a very young baby, who chewed solemnly on a half-ripe cucumber as she poked his fat. brown cheeks.

There were cacti in the dusty square; there was a cold gray church with a miracle-working Madonna, whom Anne regarded with awe, and there was, better still, the long pier, with the rusty-sailed fishing-boats starting out for their day's work. It was all enchanting. But best of all was her homecoming. As she entered the cool little hall, a lady was coming down-stairs—a beautiful, golden-haired lady—carrying a straw hat trimmed with poppies.

Anne's eyes grew big with admiration, and then something happened that was almost too good to be true. The pretty boy ran out of the little

reading-room, calling, "mama!"

In five minutes Anne knew that the beautiful lady was Mrs. Cresborough, that she was delighted to lend Jimmy to Anne for the whole morning, and that Mrs. Cresborough was not only the most beautiful person in the world, but the kindest.

At breakfast Anne had a disappointment. The gentleman who came and sat down between the beautiful lady and Jimmy, with an air of belonging to them, was as old as the hills—nearly forty. That she should have such an aged husband! Anne's coffee lost its savor.

Then another gentleman came and joined Mrs. Cresborough's party—an exceedingly handsome young fellow, with long, dark lashes and a short beard. Anne at once decided that this was the husband and the years-stricken one only the brother. The handsome man did not eat, but leaned one elbow on the table and talked in an undertone.

Anne was curious, but she was also honorable; she had had enough to eat, and honor compelled her to leave the dining-room. As she passed him, Jimmy stopped her with an imperative wave of his milky spoon.

"I'm coming, too, Anne; wait a minute," he said. His mother smiled, lazily; the handsome man continued to roll a bit of crumb between his thumb and forefinger, and did not look up.

The other man, however, rose and bowed. "You must not let my little

boy torment you," he said.

Anne felt a pang of disappointment. Who, then, was the handsome man? "Oh, no," she stammered, somewhat confused; "he doesn't torment me. I love him—I mean, I love children."

Mrs. Cresborough bit her lip: Anne looked such a child herself! "If you will tell me your name, I will teach him what to call you."

"My name is Anne Orme, and I told

him to call me Anne."

"Mrs. Cresborough introduced her husband, and then turned to the roller of crumbs. "Count!" Opening his half-shut eyes, the young man jumped up, suddenly bowing.

"Miss Orme, Count San Luca."

As soon as possible, Anne flew away to tell her mother, who had had a bad night and was not yet up.

"Cresborough? Ah, yes; it must be Maud Smith and her husband. What luck for you, Anne! Four beau-

tiful dears to adore!"

Anne laughed. "I don't adore him, mother; he looks very dull. But she is seraphic; and the count is awfully handsome—dark and romantic, you know, with beautiful, soft eyes, like a nice, good-tempered cow."

like a nice, good-tempered cow."
"Anne!" laughed her mother. "To compare the beauteous Italian noble-

man to the homely cow!"

But Anne only shook her head. Cows do have beautiful eyes.

II

Two or three days after the meeting with the Cresboroughs, Anne went out early to seek Jimmy, and found him hard at work digging, a few yards away from the capana in which sat his mother and San Luca.

With a brief good morning to Mrs. Cresborough, in which all her adoration looked out of her eyes, the young girl passed on and, sitting down by Jimmy, began playing with him. Mrs. Cresborough lay back in her low canvas chair, a bit of lace-work on her knees.

"Sweet little thing," she murmured.
"M-m," answered San Luca from
his place at her feet.

"You are very rude."

"Am I? I beg your pardon. My rudeness was due to my honest inability to answer your remark."

"Why?"

"You know as well as I do," he returned, curtly, "that I never see any one but you."

Maud Cresborough flushed. "What

nonsense!"

Down by the lace-frilled ocean, James Hobart Cresborough and Rex, his dog, were pacing up and down. A man passed crying his wares, "Gloves, of silk, of kid, of thread"; a woman was wading waist-deep in the blue

water, ploughing up shell-fish.

Anne and Jimmy, noticing this most interesting person, rushed to the water's edge to inquire what she was doing. The woman gave them no answer, but struggled on at the hard toil in dogged silence.

"Shell-fish, Miss Anne," explained Cresborough; "all kinds."

Anne patted Rex's silky head. "Poor thing!" she said. Then, the delight of all things coming back to her: "What a darling Rex is!"

"Yes, he's a good old dog."

"I have been thinking, Mr. Cresborough, how very lucky you are."

"I, Miss Anne?"

"Yes, I mean—Jimmy is such a dear, and then—Rex, and then—Mrs. Cresborough is so perfect!"

He smiled at the quaint, shy enthusiasm in her voice. "Yes, am I

not very fortunate?"

Anne was content. She had several times noticed in him a curious, dull look, as of one patient in misery, and she had now slily tested him. He did appreciate his blessings! He was not sympathetic and he was pitiably old, but he must have had some good qualities, or she would not have loved him.

She went back, near Mrs. Cresborough, and sat down. The two next her were very quiet. The count had an open book on his knees, but he was not reading. His eyes were fixed on

the sea.

Anne burned with sudden indignation. Mrs. Cresborough was watching her husband, and he, insensible wretch, was walking away with his dog, with never a backward glance. San Luca's picturesque dark head stood out strongly against Mrs. Cresborough's white gown. Anne thought his tragic black eyes ideal. He never smiled, and that, too, was a great advantage for a hero. For he was a hero—whose, she did not know; not Mrs. Cresborough's, of course, but somebody's.

Anne hoped, vaguely, that sometime, when she was older, she might have a hero like him. It never occurred to her to wish for San Luca himself. Her adoration of him was very humble, partaking of the nature of. that of the moth for the star. he might do for Bessie Chester, who was very blonde. Anne sifted the warm sand through her fingers, and dreamed.

"Anne!" Mrs. Cresborough rose, "We are going in; folding her work. will you come?"

Anne jumped. "Oh, yes; of course.

And—may I carry your hat?"

The beauty smiled and went on ahead with San Luca, as her husband came up and joined Anne.

"How lovely she is!" the girl said, looking down at her own tumbled frock, with indulgent disdain; "how

perfect her gown is!"

At the door of the hotel they were met by a young man with a short black pipe in his hand. Anne ran to him, her face aglow with delighted sur-"Oh, Dick, how ripping of you prise. to come!"

The Cresboroughs passed on with a casual glance, San Luca leaving them with a parting bow, in which Anne was

included.

"My dear little thing, how well you look! I've been waiting for you, and didn't see you come. You were hidden by the big woman."

"Oh, Dick, she isn't a big woman!" "Isn't she?" Dick Brown nodded indifferently. "All right; I don't care.

Are you really glad, Nancy?"

"Of course I'm glad; I was thinking, only this morning, that I'd be perfectly happy if you and Billy were

"Billy!" Dick's eyes, which had begun to beam, clouded. But Anne did not see. She was running on ahead to tell her mother.

III

While Anne was impatiently submitting to the ministration of Larrabee, her mother's maid, in the next room, Dick said, very softly, "Well, Aunt May, what do you think?"



Mrs. Orme laid a pale finger on his lip. "Not yet, Dick. You would only startle her."

He sighed. "It's awfully hard."

"I know, but it would change her, and I don't wish her changed just yet."

"Nor I, heaven knows! She is

perfect."

For a few minutes, he stared moodily at the oiled brick floor between his big, well-shod feet. Then he asked, abruptly: "Who is that black-eyed chap with the Romeo expression?"

Mrs. Orme laughed. "Don't be a goose. He is one of her loves, and is hardly aware of her existence. I'll let you know the minute there begins to be

any one."

He rose and went to the window. "Thanks, I know you will; and yet—Rippin' view," he added, as Anne entered the room in a fresh frock, with smoothed hair.

The next few days passed in a whirl of delight. One afternoon Anne, Mr. Cresborough and Dick rode on donkeys up through olive terraces and chestnut groves, to a village high perched on a hill, where they inspected a famed Madonna; and afterward they drank sweet wine on the terrace of a little pink inn.

Dick Brown never forgot that day. Anne wore a stiffly-starched blue gown, with a white sailor collar. In spite of her broad hat, she was sunburned—her little nose was red and shining. It was, perhaps, unlovely, and it was certainly unpoetical, but Dick liked her sunburned.

He even thought, that evening, on looking at Mrs. Cresborough's beautiful pink-and-white face, that she looked like an under-done bun. Such is the tender passion!

Mrs. Cresborough was very gracious to Anne. She knew that Anne adored her, and she adored being adored. Besides, Anne was, unconsciously, very useful.

One day, Cresborough and Dick, who had become good friends, went to Pisa, and Anne set out for a solitary walk. It was a bright, windy after-

noon, and she soon turned off the beach into the Pineta, which was agreeably sheltered. The ground was covered with slippery, fragrant pineneedles, and the rushing wind blew lovely melodies through the branches overhead. Anne went on, buzzing to herself in a strange little way that was her nearest approach to singing. She was so happy that, when she came suddenly on Mrs. Cresborough and San Luca sitting on a log, she burst out into a positive cry of delight.

"Oh, how nice! How glad I am to see you, Mrs. Cresborough! Isn't it a heavenly day, and don't the woods

smell gloriously?"

Confident of the welcome Mrs. Cresborough usually gave her, she sat down by that lady and beamed on her with the maddening beam of the de trop.

"Isn't this too far for you to come alone?" Mrs. Cresborough asked.

Anne continued to beam. "Oh, this isn't far. What a lovely gown! You look like—like—the goddess of the forest!"

· Mrs. Cresborough did not answer, and San Luca impatiently whipped his yellow boots with his stick. Anne was startled, without knowing why.

Then the Italian rose. "Shall we go on, signora?" he said, so pointedly that even Anne understood. She flushed, and tears came to her eyes as she jumped up.

"Good-bye, Anne." Mrs. Cresborough held out her hand. "Have a

nice walk!"

Picking up her gown in a way which poor Anne, even in the anguish of that moment, admired, she walked slowly away through the shifting shadows, San Luca at her side.

Anne watched them, the tears in her eyes edging everything with iridescent colors. "They didn't want me," she said to herself, bitterly; "they didn't want me, and I was such a donkey that I didn't understand!" Then she turned and went slowly home. It seemed very far, and her heart was as heavy as the drifted sand that impeded her weary progress.

But she did not tell her mother what had happened—she only told her mother pleasant things.

That evening Anne kept carefully away from Mrs. Cresborough, and greatly delighted Dick by asking him to take her out in a sailboat. Antonio took them in his red-winged Seabird, and, with the dramatic sense born in every Italian, steered them straight into the setting sun.

Anne sat in unusual silence, her eyes big with the boundlessness before her. That quiet was something so new in her that Dick watched her with a little feeling of uneasiness in his heart. What if she were thinking of that

black-eyed chap!

Anne was thinking of the blackeyed chap—and Mrs. Cresborough. She was deciding that, though they had hurt her dreadfully, they had not meant to do so, and that it was her own fault; she had been stupid and tactless.

When the sun had really gone, and the gold began to fade from the ruffled water, Antonio turned his boat and made for home. The sight of land broke the spell, and Anne, having reassured herself as to the innocence of her two loves, chattered gaily all the way back. She even ate a large piece of gray bread and drank a glass of wine that the old fisherman gave her. It had been a beautiful evening; God was in His heaven; all was right in the world.

As Anne and Dick passed along the beach, on their way to the hotel, Mrs. Cresborough, who was sitting solitary in the shadow, called to Anne, and Dick went on alone. Anne was shy, but in a few minutes she felt herself again at her ease—more than that, gloriously proud and happy.

Mrs. Cresborough had confided in her! It appeared that San Luca had been telling Mrs. Cresborough his troubles, just as Anne appeared in the wood, and, as he was very unhappy about something, and was asking Mrs. Cresborough's advice, Mrs. Cresborough put it to Anne whether there was not some excuse for his rudeness.

Anne saw, of course, that there was every excuse, and very humbly apologized for her stupidity in not disappearing into thin air at once.

"The truth is," Mrs. Cresborough continued, "that I was awfully sorry for him, even though he was rude to

my own little Anne."

Her own little Anne laughed with pleasure. "Poor man! I wish I might ask just one question? I'd never, never tell!"

Mrs. Cresborough smiled. "I think

you might, dear; just one."

After a minute's hesitation, Anne said: "Well, he is so romantic-looking, I thought, perhaps, he might be in love—frightfully in love!"

Mrs. Cresborough patted the thin little hand that lay in hers. "Yes, you are right; the poor fellow is

'frightfully in love.'"

Anne tried to be sorry, but she could not. It was too interesting. A love-affair, and, she hoped, a hopeless one! He looked like a hopeless lover—hopeful ones are so idiotic!

While she pondered these things, footsteps came down to the board-walk from the street behind, and San Luca himself appeared, a cigarette between his lips.

Anne bolted, muttering something

about her mother.

IV

"MOTHER, what is the matter with Dick?"

Mrs. Orme looked up, quickly. "With Dick?"

"Yes. He's so queer lately!"

"I don't know, dear. Perhaps he isn't well."

"That must be it; and I'm perfectly sure he hasn't any quinine with him. I'll give him some of ours."

Mrs. Orme could not repress a smile at this new application of that useful drug.

"I noticed it first two or three days

ago, after our sail. He's so grouchy! Says he doesn't sleep well, too, and I call that a bad sign.

"Do you?" laughed her mother.

Even in Italy in May, alas, it sometimes rains! For four days, now, it had poured. Anne wrote dozens of letters; she also wrote a novel. The novel was about San Luca and his unknown fair. Anne herself thought it rather good.

During the bad weather Mrs. Cresborough kept her room, and Dick Brown, curiously enough, made hay. He and Anne took long walks together, as neither of them minded a wetting, and he waited patiently while Anne visited some of her friends in the village. He owned an estate in Ireland, and thought he could stand a good deal in the way of smells, but after one trial he gave up going into the houses. Nevertheless, the quinine, it seemed to Anne, had done Dick good, and she declared that he was growing fat.

One afternoon the sun came out and beamed at Anne. That evening she was told by Mrs. Cresborough that Count San Luca wished them all to go to lunch with him at his villa in the hills.

Anne was enchanted. San Luca was very, very kind to invite her.

But that evening Anne received a shock. She found, on going to her room for the night, that she had left her hat in her capana, on the beach, and as she knew the damp night air would injure it, she went to fetch it. Her coming, over the soft sand, was as silent as the moonlight. Suddenly, she stood quite still, and the earth seemed to rock before her.

Mrs. Cresborough and San Luca were in the capana, and the Italian, kneeling by the chair in which she sat, held the beautiful woman in his arms.

They were very quiet, as though they had been in the same attitude for some time, and Anne could see Mrs. Cresborough's lovely face upturned in the moonlight. At length, as the girl started to turn away, they heard her, and sprang apart.

"The devil!" said San Luca.

Anne fled, incontinently. She ran and ran down the beach, her little black shadow scudding beside her, typical of the horror she was trying to escape. At length she stopped, out of breath, and, turning, followed her shadow home. She was aghast, despairing.

When she reached the hotel, she was told that Mrs. Cresborough wished to

see her.

Mrs. Cresborough, in a blue dressinggown, lay on her bed. The room was unlighted but for a candle, and a broad band of moonlight cut the floor into two parts.

"Sit down," Mrs. Cresborough said,

impatiently pointing to a chair.

Anne did not move; she would stay on her side of the moonlight.

"Anne, you are unjust."

Anne would rather have been called cruel than unjust, but she did not speak.

"Anne, dear, I was so shocked! The

poor boy is in love—with me!"

"I know," answered Anne, drily.

Mrs. Cresborough thought for a moment, then continued: "I thought you would be sorry for me. Think of my feelings!" She moved, and could see that her eyes were red. "I am so ashamed! And it was not my fault; I never suspected anything.' Still Anne did not change her position. "Oh, Anne, I thought you would help

And then, at last, Anne crossed to the other side of the bar of moonlight.

When she was once more alone, Mrs. Cresborough went to the window and looked out. Down at the edge of the waves walked a man-it was her husband. Frowning, she crossed room and, leaning on the other window-ledge, looked long at a small light far up on a hill.

THE next morning San Luca was pacing up and down the terrace of his villa, awaiting his guests. He had heard nothing from Mrs. Cresborough since she had left him, five minutes after Anne's inopportune apparition in the capana, the night before. had assured him that she could manage Anne, and that the luncheon should take place as arranged—still, it was awkward. Little Miss Anne had made a strange impression on him, as she stood staring at them in the moonlight. He had hardly noticed her before; she had been to him merely one of the tiresome people who surrounded Mrs. Cresborough. He had wasted little thought on any of the tiresome people. Cresborough he frankly despised, for not taking better care of a beautiful Brown the Italian considered wife. a mere English boule-dogue, and Anne and Jimmy were children.

Now, however, he remembered something in Anne's face that made him uneasy. Supposing she should take it into her head to tell Cresborough!

It might have been better for him had he gone to Rome that morning—called away by a telegram. He would miss Mrs. Cresborough, for he loved her. Oh, yes, he loved her, but he would get over it! He shrugged his shoulders.

The hot air quivered about the red vases at the ends of the terrace; the whole world smelt of heliotrope. The cook, somewhere off to the left, was singing a love-song. Then San Luca heard the sound of wheels, and crossed the hall to the other side of the house.

At first, he thought Anne was not in the dusty carriage; but he was wrong. Anne was there; much against her wishes, she had come to support her friend.

It was very cool and pleasant in the bare old dining-room, and the luncheon was delicious. Anne was hungry, but she ate as little as possible.

Her attitude amused San Luca, who pressed little attentions on her and gravely watched her struggle to be polite. Mrs. Cresborough had managed to whisper to him that it was all right, that Anne had promised not to tell.

After luncheon they went into the drawing-room.

"Miss Anne," said San Luca, "shall I sing a song to you?"

Anne flushed scarlet, to Dick's despair. "Do you sing?" she stammered.

"I do. Shall I sing to you? Would you not like it?"

"Yes; please do."

So he sang song after song, and Anne's flesh crept on her bones at the queer harmonies of the Southern songs, and the heart-broken wail of the very cheerfully commonplace young man's voice. But, at length, the singer forgot himself, and, watching Mrs. Cresborough in a mirror, sang at her, remembering only that he loved her wildly, passionately—pro tem.

Anne was filled with indignation, and, leaving her place, she went and sat down by her friend, to whom she whispered: "He is a beast. Just don't look at him!"

VI

Maud Cresborough was a trifle nervous during the next few days, and the unusual color in her cheeks made her more beautiful than ever. San Luca had recovered from his fear of Anne. He saw that she loathed him, but he knew that she would never tell what she had seen. Mrs. Cresborough's fright had resulted in a caution that increased the Italian's feeling for her She had been rather more in love with him than he with her, and he had been somewhat annoyed by the fact; but now she refused to walk with him, or to see him alone, and he found himself in a state bordering on frenzy. He must and would see her!

One day she appeared in a palegreen gown, that drove him quite mad. He wrote a note which he slipped into her hand, under her husband's very eyes—a fact that gave him a certain satisfaction. Then he awaited results. A week earlier he would have laughed at the idea of running away with her, but her avoidance of him, combined with the green gown, had brought him to the point of threatening to shoot himself, if she would not go with him. He knew that he would not shoot himself, but he knew that, at that moment, he thought he would.

And she believed him. Shortly after having read the note, she went to her room, where she found Anne playing with Jimmy.

"How you do love children, Anne!" she said, almost fiercely. "I hope you'll have some of your own, some day."

"I hope so, too," answered Anne,

promptly.

"You probably won't, however!" went on Mrs. Cresborough; "that's the

way of the world."

Anne looked up. "What's the matter? Are you not well? Or has he been bothering you?"

"Yes, he has been bothering me.

But it will be over to-morrow.'
"Why, is he going away?"

"Ves"

Anne heaved a deep sigh. "Thank goodness! Then you'll be happy again!"

The beautiful woman smiled. "Yes I'll be happy—after to-morrow."

And she meant it. She was a weak, silly woman, unable to bear the weight of her own great beauty, but she loved San Luca, and she really believed that she would be happy with him. She could not realize the inevitability of the future, and she could not read the character of the man, who did love her, in his way, but who had loved and would love, many others.

Anne sat down on the floor, and took off her shoes. It was only nine o'clock and still nearly light; Anne remembered when she had always gone to bed by daylight. She was very happy, for San Luca was going away the next day. Whistling softly to herself, she rose, pulled the big pins out of her hair, and rang the bell. The chambermaid came, a flat-chested, red-nosed old maid. Anne was rather fond of Rosina, and at once noticed that her nose was redder than usual.

"Why, Rosina, you have been crying!" she said, in her primitive Italian. Rosina sniffed, set down the hotwater tin, and wiped her eyes with her

"Signorina, do you know where the signore of number eighteen is, this

evening?"

Anne was surprised. "No—oh, yes; I do, too. He has gone to see a friend at the Victoria. Why?"

Rosina dropped the little boot she had just picked up. "Oh, signora! signora!" she wailed.

Anne lost patience and scolded her. "What is the matter?" she cried.

"Do stop howling and tell me!"

"Ebbene—though I'm not the woman to tell such things to young ladies—if I must, I must. Giorgio, il signor conte's man, told my cousin, the daughter of one-eyed Raffaello, the green-grocer. Il signor conte and the signora of number eighteen are going away together to-night!"

Anne's jaw dropped. "Going away together! Where are they going?

That's nonsense!" she said.

"No; it's true. She's going to leave her husband. Oh, don't you see?"

Anne did see, and, when Rosina ran out of the room, in answer to the bell, the girl sat down on the edge of her bed, alone in the total collapse of all her faith in the world. She could tell no one, not even her mother, who must not be agitated. Anne was so cold that she shivered.

Anne found herself dressed again, and went quickly down the passage toward Mrs. Cresborough's room. As she passed by the little salon, she saw San Luca, standing by an open window. Clasping her hands tightly, Anne went in and closed the door.

VII

EVERYTHING was ready. Giorgio was already at the station with the luggage, and the cab would come any minute for San Luca.

San Luca found, now that he had his own way, that the charm of it was rapidly evaporating. He was growing

old! He mourned this with the grav-

ity of the Latin at twenty-four.

He was wondering how long his love would last, when he heard a slight noise and, turning, saw Anne.

"Oh," she cried, without prelude, "surely you won't be so wicked!"

"Wicked? What do you mean?"

"I mean—oh, about her. You are

going to run away with her."

San Luca burst out laughing at a vision evoked by her words. He could not have carried Maud Cresborough to save his life.

"Cara signorina mia—" he began, but Anne interrupted with an astonishingly peremptory movement of her

small brown hand.

"She says you love her. If you love her, how can you harm her so

terribly?"

His face darkened. "So she has taken you into her confidence!" He was very angry. "It takes two people to 'run away,' as you call it," he said, slowly, and Anne understood.

"It is—it is horrible." The short upper lip trembled. "Oh, please don't

do it!"

It was ridiculous, unheard of, preposterous; but Anne looked very pretty as she pleaded. And she had looked pretty when she scolded. He wondered how she would look when—then San Luca lost his head.

"Anne," he said, "will you marry

me?"

"Oh, please! I am in earnest."

"So am I, Anne. I have been bad, as you say, but I will be good, Anne!"
"Please; no, I can't—I won't."

He forgot the waiting cab, the woman who had probably even now started to the station to meet him. "I love you!" he said.

He did not love her, but he thought

he did, for the moment.

But Anne shook her head, frowning. "I will not, so please stop!"

Then: "She loves me, and you can save her."

"Do you mean that you are trying to bully me?"

Then, suddenly, she realized the strength of the cards she held.

"If you love me, she won't go," she

There was enough good in him to make him hate himself, as he persisted.

"She will go!" he said.

Anne darted from the room, without a word.

Mrs. Cresborough was pinning on her hat when Anne came in without knocking.

"You! What is the matter?" she

asked, sharply.

Anne laughed. "I came to tell you a piece of news. Count San Luca has just asked me to marry him."

Maud Cresborough's face whitened.

"What?"

"Count San Luca has just asked

me to marry him."

The beautiful woman sank into a chair. It never occurred to her to doubt Anne's word. After a moment she whispered: "And—you have accepted him?"

"Accepted him? I loathe him."

This, too, was the truth, and Mrs. Cresborough knew it. With an effort, she rose and turned down the lamp. "All the lamps in this hotel smoke," she said, impatiently. Then she sat down again.

"I am glad you did not accept him, Anne. I fear he is, like many Italians,

rather unprincipled."

Anne burst into a harsh laugh.

Then Mrs. Cresborough understood, and, without a word, stood aside to let the girl pass to the door. As she opened it, some one knocked, and the concierge appeared.

"A note for you, miss," he said. Then he held out his salver to Mrs.

Cresborough.

"Il signor conte sends many compliments, signora," he said. "He has been called away suddenly." She took the cards, mechanically.

This, then, was the end.

Anne had opened her letter. She read it carefully through, and then handed it to Mrs. Cresborough.

"I don't wish it," she said, and left

the room.

Mrs. Cresborough sat down by the

table, turned up the smoking lamp and slowly unfolded the note.

MADEMOISELLE:

You have left me only one course—to go away. Although you despise me, I am a gentleman, and you must allow me to express my regret at your having been mixed up in this unhappy affair. In only one way can I serve you, and that I will do-go away and never again approach your friend, for whom you pleaded better than Permit me, mademoiselle, to you knew. sign myself,

Your humble servant, SAN LUCA.

VIII

San Luca is not yet married, though he has been in love eight times since the episode of Anne. He did not regret Maud Cresborough for any length of time, and would shortly have been in despair had Anne responded to his momentary emballement, but his letter was well meant and perfectly sincere.

Anne had been pretty, as she

scolded and pleaded!

"Mr. Brown," Mrs. Cresborough said the next day, as she and Dick waited for the train that was to take her and her husband to Florence, "I wonder if you'll let me say something to you?" Dick grunted. "It's about "It's about Anne." He grunted again. He wished Cresborough would hurry with that luggage.

'I have seen," the beautiful woman went on, not looking at him, "that you were—well, not friendly toward poor San Luca; and, of course, I know why. I think, under the circumstances, that I am justified in

breaking a confidence for you."

"I don't wish you to break any confidences for me, Mrs. Cresborough."

"Anne refused San Luca—that is

Here is Jim."

Dick went back up the hot white street, his straw hat, bound with his gaudy college colors, tilted over his eyes. Just as he reached the hotel, he caught sight of Anne, who had not before appeared that day, far up the He hurried after her. he caught up with her, he held out his hand.

"Poor old Anne! you do look seedy. Awful headache, eh?"

"No," returned Anne, bluntly, "I

haven't a headache."

After a pause, Brown stopped short. "Look here, Anne; was San Luca in love with you?"

"No."

"Well, then—it's none of my business, but I want to know if he proposed to you."

"You've no right to ask me that." "Oh, Anne!" he began, humbly,

but he stopped short.

She looked at him, and her face changed. "Let's go home; mother

will be waiting."

They turned and walked quickly back over the hard sand. Just before they reached the capana, Dick stopped again.

Anne," he said, "do you think you could ever care enough for me to marry me? I don't mean now,

but some time?"

Anne shook her head. "No, Dick; I can never care for any one again. I used to love every one, you know, but now-well, I can't tell you why, but I have stopped believing in people."

Dick did not laugh.

"I have not done anything to make you lose faith in me, have I, Anne?"

"I know you haven't. I can't tell you why, and I can't trouble mother; but I can never care for any one again."

Dick drew a deep sigh. "Well, if you won't have me, I think I'll go away somewhere, and shoot things.

Anne's eyes filled with tears. Dick, please don't go. I can't imagine it without you!"

"I can't help it, Anne. I can't

stand it any longer."

Anne hesitated a moment, and then said, slowly, "Well, Dick, I told you I'd promised never to care for any one any more; but-if I-I ever should—well—it couldn't ever be for any one but you!"

He couldn't see her face, but he

was satisfied.

"I'll stay, Anne," he said.

Then they went on to the hotel.

BOBBY JONKS ON HUMAN NATURE

By Tom P. Morgan

[UMAN nature is the excuse we generally offer for acting like a pig—only a pig merely attends to his own business and makes a hog of himself according to the dictates of his own conscience, and we A pig don't lie, nor tell the don't. teacher on you, nor slap you down just b'cuz your clothes fit you better than his'n, nor marry you and henpeck you and drive you to drink, nor elocute you into an early grave, nor feel bigger than you without any reason, nor collect money for the heathen, nor buy wine for actresses, nor dye his whiskers, nor sell his vote for a mess of potash, nor tell you about his dyspepsia, nor try to reform you, nor be a Daughter of the Revolutionnor anything, only just 'tend strictly to his knitting and be a pig.

Humble though he is, the pig don't call his squeals singing. I am not mentioning any names, you understand, but from this we should learn to emulate the poor but honest pig. He don't flatter himself that he is a skylark, and neither should we—especially if we are an old maid. My Aunt Almira is an old maid, and my Uncle Bob says he wishes to gosh he had a dollar for every time he don't enjoy hearing her warble. Uncle Bob is an old bachelor. The pig seldom lives to be old—the good die young.

Every time we do a particularly ratty thing we say, "Aw, well, it's human nature!" And I guess that's about so, from what I know of folks in general. Birds in their little nests agree, but it is human nature for little children to bark and bite and scratch each other's eyes out. It is human

nature to get all you can and try to keep all you get, and also to be thankful b'cuz there is always somebody that's a great deal worse off than you are. It is human nature for us to grin and say, "I told you so," when we never said anything of the kind. It is human nature for a woman who is fat and hates it to think every woman who is thinner is so just for spite; and Uncle Bob says that when a woman is as fat as a bass-drum nothing tickles her so much as to have some man call her "little girl." Honest, that's what he said; but wouldn't it bump you?

It is human nature for us to be stuck on ourselves without any particular excuse, but we should always bear in mind that there are plenty of other people just as insignificant as we are. A big man flatters himself that he aches harder than a small one. but it ain't so. According to Uncle Bob, a good many men, if the egotism was pulled out of them, would look like umbrellas with the ribs gone. Uncle Bob says, "What's the use in climbing a tree to get a peach, when if we wait long enough it will fall down to us? We don't have to kill a man in order to get even with him; if we are patient he will die on his own hook. If we don't run after the women they'll run after us. All this is human nature.'

So is 'most everything else in this life, according to Uncle Bob's way of looking at it. He says he don't know why reformers are generally deadbeats, only it seems to be human nature. He also says that when you find a pack of uncurried children that need patching so badly that they have

to scoot up garret every time company comes, and a husband and father as meek as a rabbit, you are sure to find a wife and mother with a fierce, commanding nose and a mission that compels her to go up and down the earth seeking whom she may devour—while her husband makes the bed at home, and her poor, benighted children cower under it a great plenty. Man's inhumanity is pretty bad, but I guess, from what I hear about it, that woman's inhuwomanity is a heap worse.

This is all I can think of about

This is all I can think of about human nature, except that there is a great deal of it in 'most everybody though, of course, some people have more than others.



THE WINGLESS LOVE

LOVE, that was fair, lies bleeding in the dust,
And desolate the shrines of tenderness
Where he, with gentle touch, was wont to bless
Each fragrant draught of joy, each needful crust
Of sorrow; fallen is the house of trust,
Which those who cherished him through storm and stress,
And all things save untruth, left tenantless,
Since naught availed to stay his traitor thrust.

Yet, when Love saw them go, he waxed forlorn,
And sought to follow where their pathway led.
Alas! his little wings were crushed and torn
Upon the ruins, whence their faith had fled.
And all his effort, henceforth, shall be vain—
False Love may never use his wings again!

CHARLOTTE BECKER.



WHERE THE BURDEN LAY

HE—Does the fact that I have only three thousand dollars a year make any difference to you?

SHE—No; but it may to you.



DURING A SPEED TRIAL

DASHAWAY—Do you believe in old maxims and sayings?

MISS RIPLACE (as they run over two children and a dog)—Well, I think there can be no doubt that "a new automobile brougham sweeps clean."

THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING AMUSING

By Ralph Henry Barbour

YOU'VE no business coming here at this time of day," said Myra, severely.

I drew out my watch and glanced at it in surprise. "But it's nearly halfpast ten," I objected.

"What?" exclaimed Myra.

"That is, it's eight minutes after," I amended. "And, anyhow, it's very late. Why, I've been up for hours and hours, inhaling the delicious morning air, walking beside the dew-spangled hedges and listening to the matin-songs of—of—the crows."

Myra sniffed, derisively. "Nonsense! You're not more than halfawake now." I opened my eyes very, very wide to disprove the accusation, and sat up as straight as possible in the basket-chair. "And I don't care how long you've been up," she went on; "you've no business coming here at this hour and interrupting affairs."

"Oh, Myra! Another affair?"

"I've other things to do than to sit on the porch and talk to you!"

"There was a time—" I began, in

gentle melancholy.

Myra sniffed again. I began to wonder if she had taken cold at the hop last evening.

"What do you wish?" she demanded.

"Wish?"

"Yes; why are you here?"

"Oh!" I settled back comfortably in the chair and brought my right knee up to the level of my chin, by means of my cane. Myra maintained her position on the porch rail, despite that I glanced invitingly toward a neighboring chair. She looked very well there, with her light-brown hair

resting against the sun-flecked screen. For a moment I viewed her with much satisfaction, before replying to her imperative question. Then:

"I came to commiserate," I said,

kindly.

"Commiserate! About what?"

"Concealment is impossible," I answered, gravely. "I know all. As soon as I heard it, I flew to your side. I bring sympathy, Myra."

"Don't be silly," she begged.

"What is it you've heard?"

"I heard— May I smoke?" Myra nodded. I lighted a cigar, with extraordinary deliberation. Then, "I heard of your engagement," I resumed, sorrowfully. Myra strove to look indifferent. She even laughed; but her laugh rang false, I thought.

"To whom?" she asked.
"To Brooke Livingstone."

Myra appeared annoyed. "Who told you?" she demanded.

"Well, a little bird-"

"Huh! One of those crows, I suppose? You're—"

"That's a rhyme; you must say something or do something; what is it?"

"Keep still," she said, imperiously.

"All right; but you'll not get your wish. Don't blame me. I told you in plenty of time. All you had to do was—to—er—throw some salt over your shoulder—or say your prayers backward——"

"Who-told-you?" with peculiar

emphasis.

"Miss Needham," I answered, hum-

"I thought so!" triumphed Myra. "I just thought so!"

"Did you? Why?"

"Because she's—she's always saying things about other people, always gossiping! And it's just like you to listen to her!"

"I couldn't help it. If you'd given me the waltz I asked for, I wouldn't have been driven to seek her society; and, further, if I hadn't sought her society, she wouldn't have told me the awful truth; and there you are. You see, Myra, it is all your fault."

"There were plenty of other girls," answered Myra, warmly. "You didn't have to go to her, I fancy."

"It was fate," I replied, shaking my head sadly. "I spent a wretched night. I tossed and turned all through the long hours—"

"I see you!" she scoffed.

I looked hurt; or, at least, I tried to. I do not believe it was a success, for Myra's countenance did not soften. Instead, she said, after a moment, with a sigh of resignation:

"Well, begin, and let's get it over

with."

"Begin?" I questioned; "begin what?"

"Commiserating."

"Oh!" At the expense of much trouble, I sat forward and reached for her hand. She drew it away, sharply. I shrugged my shoulders. "I'm sorry, but I can't commiserate with any one unless I hold her hand. It's absolutely necessary."

"Then you might as well go back to the hotel," she answered, cruelly.

But I shook my head. "I have a duty to perform, Myra. Far be it from me to allow my personal inclinations to interfere with the discharge of my duty. Nay, perish the thought!"

"Well, if your duty is to sprawl here all the morning in that chair, and

smoke horrid cigars---'

"You noticed it?" I cried, eagerly. "It is awful, isn't it? It's one of his, Livingstone's. Do you know, Myra"—I dropped my voice to a hoarse whisper and looked suspiciously about the porch—"do you know, I half-believe he's trying to get me out of the way, to poison me off; else, why

this?" I looked accusingly at the cigar.

"Well, if he finds you as tiresome as I do," replied Myra, "he's not altogether to blame."

"How sharper than a servant's tooth—" I began. Myra slid off the railing.

"I'm going in," she announced,

calmly.

"One moment!" I implored. "Tell me, is it—am I to believe the worst?"

"I'll not tell you. If you wish to know any more you may go back to Stella Needham. Besides, it's none of your affair whether I'm engaged to Mr. Livingstone or not."

"Well, really, Myra, considering that I have promised to marry you

myself----'

"Our engagement is broken off, and you know it very well!" she answered,

sharply.

I shook my head in remonstrance. "No, Myra, that is not absolutely true. Let us, whatever happens, be quite honest with each other. You broke your half of our engagement, but I have never concurred; so, at least, you are half-engaged. As your half-fiancé, I must protest against this—er—this folly."

"I don't care a—a—"

"Myra!"

"—a continental for your protest! You may protest until you're black in the face."

"Horrors!"

"If I want to marry Mr. Livingstone, I shall!"

"But how about me? Now, look here, Myra, I'm not one to disparage a rival, but I beg of you to pause in your mad career and consider one or two things."

Myra paused in her mad career, long enough to sit perilously on the edge of the bamboo table and swing a very small shoe in a manner that suggested irritation. I relighted my cigar, which had gone out during the excitement, and then faced her, gravely.

"I ask you, Myra, to compare the attractions, the merits, the charms of Brooke Livingstone with mine. Let

us go about it systematically. First, as to worldly wealth—

"Money isn't everything,"

Myra, shortly.

"Your tone implies that it isn't anything," I responded; "so, we'll let it go. Secondly, as to—er—posi-

"Mr. Livingstone is quite prominent

socially and quite-

"Exactly; just what I was about to The score is one—and. Thirdly, as to personal—er—attraction."

Myra grinned. I frowned, severely. "Brooke Livingstone has, I will acknowledge, a certain—er—physical beauty, which, as a whole, is satisfying. But, if we proceed to analyze it, we find that it is deceptive. For instance, his nose-

"His nose is beautiful!" cried Myra. "I grant you that it is well shaped

and regular-"

"It's a very good nose!"

"I've no objections to make to it on the score of morals," I went on. "It may, as you say, be a very good nose; possibly, it never inserts itself into other persons' affairs-

"Noses are different," commented

Myra, softly.

"-or otherwise misbehaves. But —but it lacks character. Now, my nose-

Myra giggled, impolitely, openly.

"My nose, while not what one could term classical, shows a marvelous depth of character. You will observe that it is not over-long and is slightly—er—let us say, retroussé. It is a good-natured nose, a fairminded nose, a nose which would prompt you to say, upon observing it, 'Here is a man who will make a good husband.' Isn't that so?"

"I had never noticed it," giggled

Myra.

"Well, let us take up the subject of mouths," I continued. "Now, that feature of Brooke Livingstone's countenance is decidedly misleading. first glance it pleases, but-

very tiresome," inter-"You're "Mr. Livingstone is rupted Myra. very, very handsome, and it is quite useless for you to say that he is not."

"Quite; I have no intention of saying so. He is handsome. But compare him with me, Myra! Look first on that picture, then on this." Again Myra gave way to unseemly merriment.

"You're levity itself,"

mured, sadly.

"I—I'm comparing!" laughed Myra. "Mind you," I went on, judicially, "I do not assert that I am handsomer than Livingstone, judged, that is, by the ordinary standards. But I do say that my features are far more interesting, more—er—unusual, unique. In studying my face you are forever meeting with astounding incongruities, constantly finding new surprises. I say, proudly, that my features are far from commonplace; never once do they descend to the plane of mediocre regularity. nose and mouth are of entirely different 'schools,' if I may use the term in such a connection; my chin and forehead are widely separated, not, you understand, by facial space, but rather by such an interim as exists between the Age of Stone and that of Electricity. Even my eyes are not from the same model; the left is of a beautiful, melting brown, the right of an equally lovely but quite different shade of hazel. In

"Bother!" interrupted Myra. rather crossly. "Your features very nice; not—handsome, exactly

"Interesting?" I prompted, hopefully.

"Yes."

"And I? You find same?"

"Well, I'm not sure about interesting," Myra replied, apparently weighing her words with much care, "but—at times—amusing."

"Thank you," I breathed, grate-

Vastly amusing," repeated Myra. " And in comparison with Brooke"Hush!" whispered Myra. She held up a warning hand and peeped out through a slit in the screen. I listened. Steps were crunching the gravel of the driveway and some one was whistling, blithely. Myra's face expressed annoyance, or so I fancied. I raised a corner of the screen with my cane and looked. Mr. Brooke Livingstone approached. I sighed. The chair was very comfortable, and Myra—

She turned from the screen. "Hush!" she whispered again.

"Hush!" I repeated. I felt like a conspirator, and seized my cigarcase from the table, resolved to sell my life dearly. Behind us an open window showed the dim recesses of the library. Myra, finger on lips, stepped across the sill. I followed. We laughed softly together in the darkness. A cane tapped the steps outside.

Myra drew the curtain.



BALLADE OF TYRANNY

WHY is it that few letters reach my door?
Why is it that so many go astray?
Why is it that a parcel from a store
Loiters from morning until twilight gray?
Like decent folk my rent I duly pay,
Yet coal and gas bills soar eternally.
Prince, read the riddle of my somber lay—
The janitor does not approve of me.

Why does the gay and festive bachelor
Who lives above me, seek to move in May?
Why must he learn, in midnight vigil sore,
Who has no key without the door must stay?
Why are his friends politely turned away,
While up above he waits with visage grim?
Prince, read the riddle of my somber lay—
The janitor does not approve of him.

Why are the couple on the second floor
Left without heat upon the coldest day,
And made to clamor uselessly therefor?
Why for small favors must they numbly pray?
Why from the roof is blown their fire array?
Why is it that their maids but stay protection.?
Prince, read the riddle of my somber lay—
The janitor does not approve of them.

L'ENVOI

Tenants, no little word we dare to say;
Beneath a tyrant's rule 'twas ever thus.
Prince, read the riddle of my somber lay—
The janitor does not approve of us.

JOHN WINW OD.

TWO PARABLES

By Charles Battell Loomis

THE MILLIONAIRE AND THE HIRELING

THERE were two men, and one was a millionaire, the other a hireling. One of them traveled everywhere, and always surrounded himself with luxuries; he dressed well, he ate the best the markets afforded, cooked in the best manner by the best chefs. His father, although not quite a millionaire, had always been wealthy, and the son started well. Although accustomed to spend money like water, he was a man of innate refinement and of cultivated tastes; he knew a good picture, even when it was advertised with a blare of trumpets; he knew a good picture, even if it was painted yesterday. He was not biased by either the price or the name of the artist. With him, merit was everything and price nothing, because he had absolute discernment. ful music appealed to him, and, in the various capitals of the Old World, he heard the finest orchestras; nor was he insensible to the fact that in Boston and in New York just as good music, quite as well played, was to be heard during every Winter season. While he admired the music and art of the Old World, he had the eye of a seer, and he knew that the music and the art of the future will come out from America; and when he had bought a museumful of Old-World treasures, and listened to innumerable concerts in Berlin, Paris and Vienna, he turned his steps to the country of his birth, and bought the pieces of sculpture and the landscapes of the young men who are working to the glory of America. greater This

spender of money had also an appreciation of literature, and, with an inexhaustible purse and abundant leisure to do as he pleased, he should have been a happy man.

But he was most miserable.

The other man was happy. be sure, he dressed in dingy, snuffy garments and spent most of his time in a dingy, snuffy office, figuring and-figuring. His hurried luncheon was not more cheap than crude, for he had never cultivated his taste in the slightest degree. His father had been crude and common before him. This slave to figures went nowhere, and saw no men save men of business. The music of a hand-organ was almost as unpleasant to him as the music of grand opera, and he thanked heaven that he seldom heard either, for the office where he worked was at the top of a high building, and his evenings were spent at home. His reading was found in his daily paper, and, although in true American style he often wished that he possessed the biggest art gallery in the world, he could not have told the difference between a tea-store chromo and a Daubigny.

Yet, he bid fair to gain his wish; for this happy, hard-working man was the millionaire, and the unhappy fellow, who had scoured Europe in search of treasure, was his well-paid

agent, his hireling.

THE REAL AND THE FALSE

A gullible man once went a-traveling. And he had eyes that were eager to behold every famous place and personage, and ears that were ready to hear every wonder-tale of the places that he visited, and a heart full of reverence and sympathy for the things that are past, and a memory that was like the eternal hills.

And, at the same time, one set out on his travels who held great men and great deeds and fine places in contempt. Little of what he heard did he believe. To him a coronation held no more interest than a shower of rain, and, when they showed him the King of Denmark, he curled his lip, and said, "I do not believe all I see. This is an ordinary citizen." And a great painting said no more to him than a newspaper of an old date.

But the gullible man's travels were full of endless interest. They pointed out a factory chimney, and told him that it was the Tower of London; and he straightway fell to moralizing over the famous dead, who had come to their end in that place. They showed him a chromo, and told him that it was an undoubted Velasquez; and he entered into an ecstasy of admiration, and recalled many things he had read of the great Spaniard. They showed him a modern eatinghouse, and told him that in that hostelry Johnson and Boswell had spent evening after evening; and he drank in their words, and made a hallowed spot in his mind for the knowledge. They showed him mummer, dressed in ducal livery to advertise a commodity, and told him that it was the Duke of Norfolk; and he said, "How like to common mortals, and yet how very different!" Always, he kept his eyes and ears

open, but, being a man of credulous mold, he received dross, and treasured it for gold.

In the evening of life, the one who had traveled in a state of lofty indifference had no thoughts worth considering, and spent his time among crowds of his fellows, that he need not be bothered to think. And of his travels, no whit of recollection remained.

But the credulous man, when the time of the coming of the sunset was near, sat on his porch under the shadows of his grape-vine, and caused to pass before his mind the great places he had seen and the characteristic things he had heard of famous men. And he called his little grand-daughter to him, and said:

"My dear, when you are grown, you may see the strange countries that I have seen, and lay up treasures for your old age, as I have done. have stood and gazed into the window of the hostelry where the great Johnson held converse with Boswell, and, perhaps, saw the same grill that cooked the steaks for the famous men of that age. And, once, I saw the Duke of Norfolk, standing on a corner like an ordinary man, the observed of all observers. And the chimneylike campanile of the Tower of London has been imaged on my eyes, and a canvas made immortal by Velasquez has been within my hands. Ah, my dear, there is nothing like travel and observation for conserving pictures for one's old age!"

And he patted the girl's silken hair, and fell into an old man's revery.



AN UNFORTUNATE GUESS

SHE broke the engagement, eh?"
"Yes; she asked him to guess her age."

"Well?"

"He guessed it."



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WINNING HIM BACK

By Anita Vivanti Chartres

MÉNAGE

OTHING ever happens," "Things said Grace. happen in newspapers and in Paris and in Conan Doyle, but not to one's self; not when one has a decent income." And she looked reproachfully at her husband, who was sipping his black coffee with a stolid and comfortable countenance.

"That is because you are married," chirped Fifine, rolling her French r's in her throat in a soft, pigeon-like way, as she dangled a cherry by its stalk, just above her pretty lips, and made little snaps at it. "What can happen to one after that?—except in the modern play and French novels. Why did you do it?"

"Ah, why did I?" sighed Grace, still looking at her husband, with her head on one side and an expression of wonder and self-commiseration in her eyes; "why did I?"

"Because you were in love with me,"

said Mr. Carrington, placidly.

"I believe I was," said Grace, with

an air of great surprise.

"So you are now," said her husband, cracking a walnut; "heels over head in love with me."

In the silence of utter amazement which followed. Fifine's laughter trilled out, youngly, and the Brat, too, laughed. The Brat-Grace's sisterwho was eight years old and wore her hair in two little, tight pigtails, which were stiff and funny to look at, laughed, shrilly and long, out of pure lightness of

She turned Grace was very angry.

to the Brat, and said:

"Leave the room, miss."

"But I haven't done anything," said the Brat, with that quick transition from wild laughter to whimpers so well known to the child soul.

"I told you to leave the room," said

Grace, irrelevantly.

The Brat got up, pushing her chair back with a great deal of noise, and turning her pigtails sulkily to the table.

"I think it is a shame," she said, when she got to the door. "And all," she added, with a loud sob, "because have no mother." With this deadly parting shaft, she left the room, slamming the door behind her.

A short silence followed. Then Mr. Carrington laughed, loudly and heartily, and Fifine giggled; but Grace was

very stern.

"I do not see anything to laugh at. You made me treat the child cruelly. Now, if I go after her with some cake, she will be unmanageable for a week; and, if I leave her to cry her heart out, I shall feel like a murderess."

"Let us compromise," said Mr. Carrington. "I will take her the cake." He rose, and, taking many sweets with

him, left the room.

"I hate him," said Grace to Fifine.

"Yes," said Fifine, with quiet, down-

cast lids; "of course."
"Why, 'of course'?" snapped Grace. "I don't see any 'of course,' except that he is my husband and that it is bad form to care about one's husband."

"Yes," said Fifine.

"And." continued Grace, aggressively, "for that matter, he is much nicer than the average husband much nicer than any husband you are ever likely to get."

"Yes." said Fifine.

"He has curly hair, and he is twentyseven, and his eyes are beautiful."

"They are," said Fifine.

Grace shot a quick glance across at her friend. Then she smiled, and Fifine smiled. And they both got up and sat on a low, soft couch in a corner, with their arms around each other's waists.

"You darling!" said Grace.

"You sweet," said Fifine, kissing her.

"I am very unhappy," said Grace. "I know you are, poor love," said

Fifine.

"You see how he treats me," continued Grace; "how infamously he treats me! how he says just the things that make me miserable! Fancy his knowing that I am in love with him! Fancy his being so sure of it that he throws it into my very face!"
"It is serious," said the little French

"What has made him so sure of you? Have you told him that you

love him—actually told him?" "Occasionally," admitted Grace.

"Occasionally!" sneered her friend. "Do you mean often? Yes, you do mean often. Grand Dieu!"—and she took Grace by the shoulders and peered into her face—"I believe you are always telling him so; always telling him that you love him, and not leaving him anything to guess at or to tremble about. Ah, fatal! fatal!"

And Fifine's little hands slipped, helpless and bejeweled, into her lap.

Grace looked guilty and miserable. "I have tried to be a good wife—" she began, meekly.

But Fifine interrupted her, starting up from her seat and walking about, with rustling skirts and foreign gestures.

"'Good!' 'good!' You always were 'good.' In school, Gracie, we used to call you 'Gracious Goodness,' for short; well, not for short. But any-how," she added, vaguely, "if you haven't learned enough to know that men don't want 'good' wives, you ought to go back to school again."

How do you know so much about what men want? You're not mar-

ried," said Grace, crossly.

"That's why I know all about it," quoth Fifine, and Grace did not dare to argue.

"What shall I do?" she said, weakly.

"My dear, you must win him back!" "Win him back!" gasped Grace.

"Why, that is dreadful.

"Not at all, not at all. It is exciting; it is great fun," said Fifine, nodding.

"But I mean," said Grace, "it is dreadful that one should have to do

"One always has to win a man back after one has married him," said Fifine.

"Men are built that way."

Grace sat pensive, raising troubled rebrows. "Win—him—back! It is eyebrows. not," she mused, "that I dislike the idea; it sounds interesting. But how does one do it?"

"Gracie," said Fifine, with glowing eyes and hand uplifted, "you must do it by keeping up the Houp-là."

"The what?" exclaimed Grace.

"The Houp-là," whispered Fifine, mysteriously.

"Hush!" she added, as Mr. Carrington's voice was heard outside. "I will tell you later on."

Grace sat still, looking bewildered and sweet, as her husband came in, holding the Brat by the hand. The Brat immediately pretended to cry, and tried to look small and shrunken and pathetic.

"Here is a good little girl," began Mr. Carrington, at which touching description of herself the Brat set up a loud and sudden wail; "a good little girl, who is coming to be forgiven. Ask pardon, youngster," he said to the forlorn little figure by his side, and took his hand away from her.

The Brat went up to Grace, slowly, with her toes turned in, sobbing a little and rubbing her eyes with a fist that held some candy.

"Please forgive me," she mumbled. Grace took hold of the warm little wrist.

"Will you never do it again?" she asked, earnestly.

"Do what again?" said the Brat. There was silence. Grace had forgotten what the Brat had done. Mr. Carrington coughed and looked out of the window, and Fifine turned her face away.

"Do what again?" repeated the Brat, scenting her advantage and

making the most of it.

"I don't know," said Grace, guiltily.
"But, whatever it was, don't do it

again."

At which the Brat giggled, because she had a sense of humor. And Grace laughed as she kissed the little, sticky face.

H

THE HOUP-LÀ

Ar noon the following day, Fifine, pink and buoyant, looking like a rose slightly powdered with veloutine, entered Grace's boudoir, with rustling skirts and trailing perfumes.

"Bonjour, ma mie!"

"Well," said Grace, dejectedly, "I have been trying to keep up the Houp-là, but as I don't know what it is, I do not suppose I have done it."

Fifine laughed. She kissed Grace lightly on the top of the head, and sat down in an arm-chair, unpinning her little fly-away bonnet and opening the ruffles around her throat.

"My dear Gracie," she said, "did it ever occur to you that no one at school ever spoke about my mother?"

"Bong Dew!" exclaimed Grace, moved to French by this exordium.

Fifine continued:

"No; everybody spoke about the Count de La Corderie, my father, but we always skipped or skimmed over the countess, my mother. That is because she was a circus girl, a dear little circus girl, with fluffy skirts, who perched on the backs of fat, white horses, and leaped through paper rings, and jabbed the clown's face with her jeweled riding-whip. She was very pretty and very clever and very funny; and, although she was the kind of mother people would call 'undesirable,' I wish, oh, I wish'—and there was a break in the little

pigeon-like voice—"that she were not dead!"

"Bong Dew," said Grace once more,

deeply moved.

"Grace, if you say that again, I shall hit you," said Fifine. "It is dreadful; it is not French."

"Very well," said Grace. "Go on,

dear."

"The count, my father, fell in love with her because of the funny little way in which she used to cry, 'Houp-là!' just before turning a somersault on the galloping horse, or while she leaped through the paper rings. She had a treble voice like a child's, and my father used to say that it went right through him and made his heart leap into his throat, every time he heard the little, shrill cry. After she was married, she never allowed him to fall out of love with her. And she told me she did it—by 'keeping up the Houp-là.'"

"But what did she mean?" began

Grace.

"My dear, she meant a number of things, of vague and subtle things, difficult to name. 'The Houp-là,' she used to say to me, 'is to married life what the sparkle is to champagne; nothing definite—empty air, indeed—but how essential! Always, Fifine, my child, when you have a husband, remember to keep up the Houp-là.'"

"I suppose it is all very lucid to you," sighed Grace; "but I do not see anything that applies to me, or to Tom. And Tom was perfectly heartless this morning as he went out," she continued. "When I looked out of the window after him, he only just turned around once to wave his hand—and not when

he got to the corner!"

"Now, then," said Fifine, folding her hands in a businesslike way, "to-morrow do not go to the window at all. If he mentions the fact, say, laughing sweetly: 'Dear! dear! did I forget? How careless of me!' And be light and sunny and nonchalant. And henceforward, ma chérie, keep a little shadow of mystery drawn over your soul, and let your eyes be dreamy under drooping lids. Trail about the

rooms in clinging gowns and undefined perfumes. Adopt fads; insist upon having your rooms filled with gardenias, when they are out of season; faint away at the sight of a certain shade of mauve. Then spring surprises upon him. Be sudden; be extraordinary; be unexpected. things! Pack up a powder-puff and a silk petticoat, and let him find you with a cab at the door, going away forever! Take poison one day. Be shot at by a frenzied lover the next. Adore him with the passion of a Spanish tigress to-day; ignore his existence to-morrow. All this, with a few other things, my dear Gracie, is what I call keeping up the Houp-là."

"It sounds dreadfully wearing,"

sighed Grace.

"Oh, well, of course, if you are satisfied to be like every other wretched wife, do it in your own way," said

Fifine, rising.

"No, no! Don't go away," cried Grace. Then, clasping her hands, she said: "But are you sure?—sure that this is the right way to—to win him back? It sounds so agitating! I thought that by being gentle and sweet-tempered and loving, that by being always the same to him——"

"You miserable!" cried Fifine, wildly, "don't you know that a man never wants sameness? Why, you must be different every time he sees you!"

"Are you sure?" repeated Grace.

"Sure? Of course, I am sure. Have I not tried it on Reginald? Have I not tried everything on Reginald?"

"Who is Reginald?" asked Grace,

bewildered, sitting down again.

"My dear, I have not told you," said Fifine, dabbing her face carefully with a little powder-puff taken from her pocket, "because things are still a little—uncertain. He is an Englishman, you know; and Englishmen never know their own minds."

"Don't they?" said Grace.

"No, they don't," snapped Fifine.

"And, if you are going to contradict
me, I might as well go home."

"Oh, Fifine, I did not contradict you. Kiss me! And I love you!"

Kiss! "And you are sweet!" Kiss, kiss, kiss! "And you are so exciting and interesting!"

Fifine was mollified. "Well, I was telling you about Reginald. My dear, he is an angel! A tall, gentlemanly angel, with a tawny mustache and a drawl like a hero in one of 'The Duchess's' novels. He pronounces his r's like w's and is always 'dweadfully bored,' because he is so superior, you know, and he writes things, essays and things, on something!" she ended, hazily.

"How nice!" said Grace, propitiat-

ingly.

"Well, my dear, you should see me keeping up the *Houp-là* with Reginald! And that is nothing to what I shall do when I have married him. I shall not be one of those benighted Anglo-Saxon wives, who still believe in being good to their husbands, and I shall manage him in French, not in English. I shall be strange, I shall be unwholesome, I shall be unexpected, I shall be impossible. And he will adore me."

"Oh, Fifine, to think that you are engaged, and that you have never

told me!" exclaimed Grace.

"Well, I am not exactly engaged. I—he is one of those slow, stolid Englishmen, who take a year or two to make up their minds about a thing—"

"Perhaps, darling," Grace ventured, tentatively, "with a man like

that, a little less Houp-là----'

Fifine cast a glance of withering scorn at her friend. "We will not speak about him any more," she said.

And no amount of coaxing, or luncheon, or delicate flattery, would move her.

"I will help you with your affairs, Grace, if you wish me to, but I will manage mine in my own way."

So they returned to Mr. Carrington and his misdeeds. Fifine decided that the first thing to do was to look through all his pockets. This they did, methodically and thoroughly, Grace getting "a turn" every time her hand found a folded paper.

"I feel very mean," she said, as she put back into a coat-pocket a bill for a diamond heart and chain that he had given her on her last birthday. "These clothes look so—so helpless, you know, poor things"; and, when Fifine was not looking, she kissed an old brown coat as she hung it up. Fifine was sniffing at a silk handkerchief, and held it out to Grace.

"Is this your perfume?"

"Yes," said Grace.

"Oh, all right," said Fifine, rather

aggrieved.

They were sitting on the hearthrug, turning Tom's evening-suit pockets inside out, when the door opened, stealthily, and the Brat put her head in.

"Aha!" she cried, derisively, "prying, are you? I'll tell Tom that you are going through his pockets. Prying!"

"Brat, darling, come here," said Grace, with a bland smile. "I have

something to show you."

The Brat stuck out a pink and

rigid tongue.

"Well, then, you shall not see it," and Grace hid one closed hand behind her back.

"What is it, anyhow?" asked the

Brat, and came forward.

"Bend down and you shall see," said Grace, and the Brat bent down.

Grace grasped one of the pigtails and pulled it hard. The Brat shrieked, loudly.

"Promise you won't tell? Swear that you won't? Never? Honor

bright?"

"Honor bright!" squealed the child, and Grace released her. Making a horrible face at them both, the Brat left the room.

"She will tell," whispered Grace. But Fifine, with many winks and nods, pointing to the open door, spoke in a loud voice as follows:

"Have you noticed, Grace, how pretty that child is growing? She really has such beautiful, beautiful eyes!" Then she was convulsed with silent laughter.

"Yes," Grace answered, as soon as she could control her voice, "and she is such a dear, noble child, too." Wild and soundless mirth on the part of Fifine. "You know," continued Grace, at the top of her voice, "she has such a sense of honor! She will never tell; she has promised us that she won't, and she always, always keeps her word."

"I don't think!" remarked the Brat, leering evilly around the open door. "And, if you have any more soft soap for me, why don't you call me in and give it to me, instead of shouting it at me through the door?"

The Brat had to be propitiated with candy and a promise to be shown anything interesting that might

be found in Tom's pockets.

Something was found, but it was not shown to the Brat. It was a thing which Fifine, with her very throaty French r's, called a "prroof," and Grace's gentle head was bent over it with many tears. A bill of fare, a French bill of fare, full of naughty things to eat and drink—for two!

"But might he not have been with another man?" Grace had ventured,

hesitantly.

"Nonsense, Gracie!" said Fifine. "Don't you know there is the greatest difference in the world between a man's bill of fare and a woman's? Look at this," and she ran over the incriminating list. "Would two men have ordered such a collection of things-Martini cocktails, dreadful caviare, huîtres, bisque d'écrevisses, foie gras au truffes, homard au diable-my dear, my dear, this is a most immoral bill of fare. There was a woman here, I tell you—a woman! And," she added, mysteriously, "probably a blonde.''

There was a fresh burst of indignation from Grace.

"Come, come! We must face it," said Fifine, with a comfortable sense of heroism. "Now, when was it? There is no date here—when was he in Paris?"

"We were there twice," sobbed

Grace. "Once on our h-h-honeymoon and once—Fifine!" she cried, suddenly, "you don't think that, while we were actually on our h-honeymoon, he was taking creatures—blonde creatures—to dinner?"

"No," said Fifine, looking wise; "I don't think so. It must have been the other time."

"That was last Summer. Oh, Tom!

Tom! Tom!"

"Gracie, my poor darling," cooed Fifine, "I am desolated for you. Now, forget everything except that you have to win him back."

Grace would have preferred leaving him forever, but Fifine, who knew life and understood men, pointed out that he then would surely go back to the woman of the bill of fare.

So Grace decided that she would stay with him and win him back.

III

WINNING HIM BACK

LITTLE did Mr. Carrington know what was going on in his household, in the

days that followed.

Grace had resolved that she would be a stranger to him, and adopted that attitude immediately on the day of the discovery of the bill of fare. But he came home in a very good humor, and did all the talking himself, and never even noticed that she was being a stranger to him.

This was aggravated by the fact that he told two funny stories at table, and she laughed at them, because she could

not help it.

She left off being a stranger to him, and determined to be dreamy, morbid and unwholesome. So she filled the house with undefined perfume and tried to faint at certain shades of mauve.

When Tom came into the atmosphere redolent of pastilles, foin coupé, bergamot and ylang ylang, he said, lighting his cigar, hurriedly, "Phew! You have had those wretched old maids, the Harrisons, up here again

for tea. I smell them." And, before Grace could answer, "It is a sure sign of middle-aged hysteria, this soaking one's self in odors. Open up, Gracie, and let us have some fresh air."

With Fifine, Grace practised fainting until she ached all over; and they determined that she should be found already "fainted," when Tom came in.

The certain shades of mauve were some dress samples of crêpe de chine, which she had her tailor send to her on approval. They were lying loose on the table, and she arranged herself limply on the floor when she heard Tom's key in the door down-stairs.

But the Brat, who had been peeping, came in and tickled her until she shricked; so she had to get up and race around the table in order to catch

and slap the Brat.

"I don't know what to do," she said, dejectedly, to Fifine, who called next day to hear results. "I don't seem to have done anything. He certainly has not noticed anything, and I don't seem to have won him back a bit."

"Will you try to poison yourself?" asked Fifine, cheerily. "You don't really take anything, of course. You lie in a darkened room and are very pale, with an empty bottle of arsenic tossed on the floor beside you."

"I cannot be pale when I want to,"

said Grace, pettishly.

"Oh, silly!" said Fifine. "Lanoline, and powder over it—that sticks and is beautiful."

Grace was unconvinced. "And then, oughtn't I to show signs of sickness?" she said.

So they set aside the poisoning.

"I have done all these things successfully with Reginald," remarked Fifine, "because, you see, he does not live in the house. He just comes in and sees me; he is terribly moved and shaken; and then I wave my hand weakly, and say, 'Go! go! go!' as I fall back, unconscious. And he goes."

"I dare say he is very glad to go,"

said Grace, whose temper had been soured by recent failures.

This occasioned a coolness, but they soon made friends again, and returned to their plans.

"You must be shot at by a frenzied lover," said Fifine. "That is infallible. You will see."

Grace was skeptical and inclined to

scoff.

"You first take an old bodice," explained Fifine, "the bodice of a dress that you don't care about. And you shoot it through the sleeve. See?"

"No, I don't see," said Grace.

"Then," said Fifine, warming to her subject, "you take a piece of mustard-plaster or porous-plaster—which do you prefer, porous-plaster or mustard-plaster?"

"I don't care," sighed Grace.

"Well, you put the piece of mustard-plaster, cut long, on your arm. When you take it off again the skin is sore and red, and that is where the bullet grazed past you! Do you understand now? Oh, that is very French, very exciting."

Grace shrugged her shoulders.

"Of course," continued Fifine; "you refuse to divulge the man's name. But you will see how excited and anxious and adoring your Tom will be. On his knees, he will implore you to tell the wretch's name—that he may kill him!"

Grace was touched.

"I will do it," she said, reluctantly. "But it is against my better judgment."

They found an old black bodice, and they took Tom's revolver from his writing-table, and went down into the yard to do the shooting. The house-maid was up-stairs, out of hearing, the laundry was empty, and Grace sent Kate, the cook, out on a hurried errand.

They were alone with the bodice and the revolver. Fifine proposed that Grace should hold the garment—well away from herself—while she, Fifine, shot at the sleeve. Grace refused, and suggested laying the bodice on the lawn and shooting down on it.

"I don't quite know what a bullet will do," said Fifine; "it might jump back at us, if we shoot on the ground."

Finally, they pinned the bodice to the wooden fence that separated their yard from the neighbor's, and fastened the left sleeve straight out against the boards.

"Now, Grace, you stand just a little away, and shoot at it," said Fifine.

"No, dear," said Grace; "you do

it-I know you want to."

"I can't shoot, unless I hold my ears," said Fifine. "I hate the noise so!"

"Well, you shoot," said Grace, "and I'll hold your ears."

And so it was arranged. After a great deal of stepping nearer to and farther from the wall, with Grace holding her hands over Fifine's ears, they decided on three paces away from the fence.

"Don't hold my ears so tight," said Fifine. Grace loosened her hold.

"Oh, now I can hear everything," said Fifine, impatiently; "hold tighter."

"How pale you are!" said Grace, bending forward and looking at her.

"So are you," snapped Fifine.
"Goodness! Here's the cook com-

"Goodness! Here's the cook coming back!" said Grace. "Hurry up and shoot."

Fifine hurried up and shot. Grace shrieked, and Fifine dropped the revolver. They never knew how it happened that the yard was suddenly full of people, and that there were two policemen holding the cook, who was struggling and shouting and kicking. The negro servant from the other side of the fence had come in, and was accusing the cook of already having tried to murder her three or four times by throwing poison and carbolic acid over the fence at her, all of which the cook convulsively denied.

Grace said she would explain to the policeman, and there was a profound silence while she explained. She said that it was not the cook, but Fifine, who had done the shooting, and that it was really on account of her (Grace's) husband that it had all occurred, because in order to win him back—

At this point, the policeman took

hold of Grace with one hand and of Fifine with the other, and said to the policeman who was holding the cook: "Bring them all along to the policestation."

Only by Fifine's great presence of mind were they saved. She was small and ingenuous, as she looked up at the officer who held her, and deliberately winked at him. She said. softly: "Take us into the house, and I'll explain-satisfactorily." With her free hand, she had dived into her pocket for a purse that she now held carelessly before her, and it was fat and full.

They were taken inside, and the policemen got forty dollars and went away, after having told the fair culprits to behave themselves in the future.

The two girls wept hysterically in each other's arms, and the cook left without notice, after getting very drunk and abusive.

Grace and Fifine went down, late in the afternoon, and unpinned the bodice from the fence.

"Did you hit it?" said Grace, as Fifine examined the garment.

"No," said Fifine; "but the bullet did go through the fence, so it wasn't such a bad shot, after all.'

IV

IN QUARANTINE

DEAREST FIFINE:

Do not come to the house. Poor. sweet Brat has the measles. We are very unhappy, and I am exceedingly anxious. She is so good and gentle that I am afraid she is going to die. Oh, if she were to die! And I have so often been unkind to her! She talks about her mother in a low, weak voice; and as poor, dear mama died when she was only four months old, she—the Brat, I mean—cannot really remember her, and I am dreadfully afraid that it may be a call, or a sign.

I wept bitterly and begged her not to; and I was greatly comforted when she asked me whether I would give her my diamond sunburst, because it showed that she was still taking an interest in earthly things. Of course, I shall not give her the sunburst.

Tom is most unkind. When I asked him to sit in the dark room and hold her hand while I had dinner, and to come down afterward and have dinner by himself, he said, "Bosh!" and other cruel things. Besides, Fifine. I have reason to believe that the Woman of the Bill of Fare is living in his office-building, down-town! What reason, you will ask? Listen. He said yesterday that he was going back to his office in the evening, to make up some arrears of work. immediately flashed upon me that it was that creature, and that the office and the arrears were a blind. So I followed him, closely veiled, in a cab. He went down in a car, and, my dear, he did go to the office! Of course, she lives there and is near him all day. I am unspeakably miserable!

What is good for mucilage in the hair? The poor, darling Brat has been arranging her scrap-book, and had the gum-bottle on her pillow. When I came in, she sank back exhausted, and all the gum poured out on her head. She looks dreadful. dare not have her shampooed. is very sweet about it, and does not seem to care, poor little angel, but she frequently asks me to kiss her on her forehead, and, what with the measles and the mucilage, it is very

unpleasant for me.

My love to you, dearest, and my kind regards to your dear father.

GRACE.

My DARLING GRACIE:

I should say alcohol. How dreadful about the creature in the office! I should go down and see her and speak to her. Make yourself very You might put on a little rouge, and the large, white hat., If she is there, you can crush her. If your suspicions are unfounded, it will delight your husband to see you —men love a ray of sunshine in their

dingy, dreary offices, in the midst of a hard day's work. When I marry Reginald, I shall always go to his office, rustling in in airy toilettes and being a ray of sunshine to him.

Do not fret about the measles. had diphtheria once, which is much

worse.

3

Your loving

FIFINE.

MY DEAR FIFINE:

I wish you had not told me about the ray of sunshine, and I wish I had not put on the large, white hat. Besides, that rouge looked dreadful in the daylight. I saw myself in a glass on the elevated train, and I looked positively purple. I have been very much insulted down-town. When I told the clerk in the outer office that I wished to see Mr. Carrington, he grinned, and said the gentleman was busy. When I told him I was his wife, he said something that sounded like "nit," and a horrid little boy, sitting in a corner, laughed. He finally blew through a tube, and said:

"A lady wants to see you"; and in answer to something inaudible, said: "I don't know."

Tom came out in his shirt-sleeves, and seemed quite startled when he saw me, and asked me what on earth had happened. I could have sworn he had the creature inside his private office, and I asked him who was with "Why, a couple of lawyers and another man," he said, crossly. did not believe him. I insisted upon seeing for myself. I pushed past him and quickly went into the inner Some horrid men that were there stared most impertinently, and when I went out again I heard them Tom was exceedingly rude, and I swept out of the place much ruffled. I did not feel as if I had been a ray of sunshine. Then a man in the elevator stepped on my dress and tore a large piece of the frilling off. I had to pin it up in the hall down-stairs, which was crowded with men, and two tough young fellows made remarks about my petticoats and my shoes, and also about my hat. They said, "Where did you get that hat?" to a tune of some kind. I reached home very sick and upset, and so far forgot myself as to speak rudely to the poor, sick child, when she asked for some marsh-mallows for her throat. She wept, and has spoken about mother again. I wish we were all dead.

GRACE.

DEAR FIFINE:

You might have written to me. As soon as the Brat is well, or rather is tired of pretending to be sick, for she is shamming most of the time, I shall leave Tom forever. All is over between us.

To-day, Sunday, after he had been reading his vulgar newspapers all the morning, I said, bitterly: "I shall go out for a walk."

He said: "All right, dear!"

I went to the door, and "Good-bye." Do you know he answered? He answered: "Good-bye." Actually!

I said: "You are very insulting."

He said: "Why?" and seemed quite astonished.

I said: "When a woman stands at the door and says good-bye, she does not mean you to answer good-bye. She means you to exclaim: don't go!'" Then I burst 'No,

My dear, he took me in his arms and kissed me, but he was laughing! He laughed and laughed, long and loud, in his vulgar, horrid way; so I came up-stairs to write to you and tell you that all is over between Tom and myself. He does not love me, and everybody knows that marriage without love is immoral. I shall go and live with Aunt Eugenia—the one you see here sometimes, with those awful bonnets. could give lessons—young women alone in the world always give I hear Tom coming uplessons. He will be sorry—very sorry —when he is left alone with the Brat. who has such horrid manners at table and always eats more than is good for her.

Poor Tom! Poor Brat! How unhappy they will be!

Good-bye! good-bye! Your miserable

GRACE.

v

THE RUBY RING

"This is my last suggestion," said Fifine, who had hurried around to see her friend. "I lay awake all night, thinking it out—it is perfect! What you want is to make him jealous, is it not?"

"I do not know what I want," said Grace, "nor why I want it, nor how I

am going to get it."

"Oh, that is only a frame of mind," said Fifine, cheerfully. "Now listen to me. This is a great idea, and by carrying it out carefully you are, at last, sure to win him back."

"Any deaths, or policemen, or being rays of sunshine in it?" asked Grace.

"No, dear," replied Fifine. "It is simply this. In order to make Tom jealous, you must have another man who adores you. If he adores you, he sends you presents, flowers, letters, jewels. Well, you get a man to send you a priceless gem——"

"Fifine," said Grace, "I have not a man who will send me a priceless gem."

"Of course not," said Fifine. "But this is what you do. You go to a jeweler; you select a ring; you pay and take it on approval. Then you send it to yourself, with a bunch of flowers and a love-letter. Your husband finds all. He makes a scene of jealousy. You win him back. Then you return the ring to the jeweler, who refunds you the money. There you are!"

Grace was thoughtful for a few mo-

ments. Then she said:

"I think this is the best thing you have hit on yet."

And Fifine replied, happily:

"I do not know what can have been the matter with me that I did not think of it before." They discussed the details. Grace had sixty dollars, and Fifine knew a jeweler, not far off. They went out, hurriedly.

"I should like to do it to-day," said Grace. "Tom was particularly hard and unconcerned this morning. He ate a huge breakfast. I think it is so heartless of a man to eat a great deal! And how he sleeps! He goes to sleep on the slightest provocation. I cannot leave him alone, or not speak to him for ten minutes, without being sure that he goes to sleep."

"That is horrid," said Fifine; and

they walked a little faster.

At the jeweler's, Fifine asked a pale young man for Mr. Rosenstein, and Mr. Rosenstein came from the back of the store, rubbing suave hands and smiling engaging smiles.

To him, Fifine explained:

"We wish to look at some rings—handsome rings—what one would call priceless gems."

"It must not cost more than sixty dollars," added Grace; but Rosenstein's benign head was turned away, and his obliging back was bent over

the show-cases in the window.

"You are inclined to be swayed by phrases, Fifine," said Grace to her friend; "phrases one reads in novels, such as 'a priceless gem,' and 'being a stranger' to a person, and being 'a ray of sunshine,' and all that. It is really very misleading and never turns out right."

But Rosenstein had returned, and was showing them a diamond ring at two thousand dollars, an emerald ring at eighteen hundred dollars, and a pearl-and-diamond ring at only four

hundred dollars.

"We want something cheaper," said

Grace; "much cheaper."

He looked at the two ladies a moment, then went to the end of the store and brought back a ring—some small diamonds around a large ruby.

"That's pretty," said Fifine.

"And what a wonderful ruby," said Grace; "so dark and rich!"

"Vahnderful! I should say," agreed Rosenstein, with a smile that brought

his nose down over his teeth and made his beard stick out.

"How much?" said Grace.

"Only two hahndred and feefty dahlars," said Rosenstein.

But Fifine turned to Grace:

"Laisse-moi faire." Then, turning to Rosenstein: "Nonsense, Mr. Rosenstein. You ask two hundred and fifty, but you mean two, and you would take a hundred and fifty, and you are going to get a hundred. Of which we will give you sixty on account."

"Ach! vaht a vahnderful calculator!" exclaimed Rosenstein, clasping ecstatic hands. "Vaht a beesiness voman! Vaht I gif to haf such a beesiness

voman in my beesiness!"

But Fifine was unmoved by flattery, and refused to give more than a hundred dollars for the ring.

"Ach, mein Gott!" cried Rosenstein, shrilly; "dat ruby alone is vorth

two hahndred dahlars!'

However, when Fifine had walked twice to the door, and Grace had spoken in a stage-whisper about going back to see that other ring they showed in the other store, Rosenstein, with a chastened countenance, put the ring into a little blue-velvet box, and accepted the sixty dollars on account.

He took Grace's address and her promise to pay the forty dollars, or return the ring, the next morning. The two friends went home in a pleasant flutter of excitement, the ring reposing in Fifine's little black-velvet reticule.

"Oh, we forgot the flowers!" ex-

claimed Fifine.

"And we have barely time to write the letter before Tom gets home," added Grace.

"I'll run and order the flowers. Hold my satchel," said Fifine, handing her the little bag. "The ring is in it. You go up-stairs and write the letter yourself; and don't be afraid of making it passionate," she added.

"Oh, Fifine! What shall I say? It seems so silly to write to one's self."

"Say, 'My adored Gracie, this little ruby ring is only a wretched token—' and that kind of thing, you know. And mind you disguise your handwriting, and don't use your own letterpaper. And you might sign it, 'Your Slave,' which is appropriate and vague."

Fifine was gone, in a flutter of light

skirts and buoyant curls.

Grace entered her house, carrying the satchel with the ring in it, nervously, and repeating to herself, "My adored Gracie, this little ruby ring is only a wretched token—this wretched ruby ring is only a little token—"

In her desk, she found some plain letter-paper, and used it all up in writing, "My adored Gracie," in different handwritings on every sheet. Thoroughly disheartened, she determined to wait for Fifine. Meanwhile, she opened the little bag, and took the ring out. In the bag, there were some other things, which she peeped at—a dainty, jeweled scent-bottle, two prescriptions for hair-washes, and a visiting-card, which she had not time to read, as she hurriedly stuffed the things back just before Fifine came in.

"Now help me to write this letter," she said, taking the large bunch of roses from Fifine and kissing her on the cheek.

But Fifine was "desolated." "Ma toute chérie, I have an appointment with Reginald to take afternoon tea at Rector's at four, and it is now nearly half-past five. He is certainly waiting for me—I have trained him well—but I never like to make him wait more than an hour and forty minutes!"

With many parting recommendations, on the landing, as to the wording of the letter and the attitude to adopt in regard to Tom's scene of jealousy, Fifine left.

Grace returned to the sitting-room, uneasy and excited. She saw a visiting-card lying on the floor, and picked it up. "Mr. R. B. Wilkins, 22 Madison Square," she mused. "I wonder who he is. I must have stolen this from Fifine. Well," and she tossed the card upon the table, "I don't suppose she will miss it. And now for his horrible love."

But she dit. T'



afternoon light shone in through the windows, warmed to pink and cooled again into light, gentle gray; and she still sat before the sheets of note-paper with, "My adored Gracie," scrawled on them, staring at the large bunch of roses and the little case with the ring.

'I cannot do it!" she exclaimed, at last, crumpling up the sheets. is an insane French notion of Fifine's!" And, hearing Tom's footsteps on the stairs, she hurriedly threw the papers away, and turned to face her husband,

with a sweet, open smile.

He kissed her, and glanced over her fair head at the table.

"Whom are the flowers from?" he asked, patting her cheek.

"From—from Fifine," said Grace.

"Why, what makes her send you flowers?" said Tom, lightly, taking the roses up and smelling them. The little case lay blue and conspicuous on the table. Grace flushed scarlet.

"She did not send them," she stammered; "she-she went out for them; I mean, she brought them yes," ended Grace, suddenly finding her husband's eyes fixed inquiringly on her.

"Why, Grace! What are you blush-

ing about?" asked Tom.

"I'm not," said Grace, with a stiff

"You look as if you were trying to tell a fib."

Grace laughed, nervously, backed away, toward the table. stood between it and Tom, looking up at her husband, with a petrified and propitiating smile.

"What on earth are you doing?" he asked. "What is the matter?" And, as she did not answer immediately, he forced her to one side, and looked

at the table.

Grace's hand shot out toward the little blue box, but Tom caught her wrist, and held it.

—?" "Why, what-

"Oh, don't!" said Grace, wildly, clutching at the box; "don't. I am not ready yet—I mean—oh, you're hurting my hand!"

Tom let her hand go at once, and opened the jewel-case.

"The deuce!" he said. "Whose is this? Fifine's?"

"No," said Grace, promptly.

"Yours?"

Grace nodded, carelessly. She was unprepared, and did not know what to say.
"Indeed?"

said her husband.

"New, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Grace. Then she added, precipitately: "Why, no; I have had it ever so long."

"Have you?" said Tom again, and he was rather pale about the nose and

"Gracie," he continued, after a moment, "what are you telling me falsehoods for? Did you buy the

thing?"

"I!" exclaimed Grace, and swallowed twice, with dry lips; "buy it! Why, how silly! Why should I buy it?"

"I did not suppose you did," said Tom. "Who gave it to you?" He asked the question very quietly, not looking at her.

"Nobody; really, Tom—nobody at

I--I-

She stopped, following Tom's gaze, which was resting on a little card, lying face downward on the table. She saw him take the card and read it. Then he raised his eyes, dark with anger and astonishment, to hers.

Who is this?" he said. "Who is

R. B. Wilkins?"

"I don't know," said Grace.

"You don't know?" cried Tom, stepping close to her; "you don't know? Here is a man who sends you flowers and jewelry, with his card, and you say you don't know him!"

Like lightning, it flashed upon Grace that she was doing it! actually doing it! She was in the midst of it, before she had known that it had begun. She was winning him back; she was keeping up the Houp-là. Everything was as it should be; and this was the scene of jealousy. The faintest of smiles crept over her face.

"Will you answer me?" said Tom.

"What are you laughing at? Who is this Wilkins, and how does he dare to send you a ring?"

He was very near to her, and his voice was harsh and hoarse.

"Oh, don't, Tom! don't! frighten me," she said.

"Will you answer me?" he cried. "Where have you met this man?"

"Nowhere! nowhere! I don't know him," she said, weakly.

Her husband put his hands into

his pockets.

"Ah, you don't know him!" he observed, sarcastically. "At least. you will admit having seen him?"

She felt that she must admit this, if she was to keep up the fiction at all; so she said that she had seen him -just seen him.

"Ah, you have! How often?" in-

quired her husband, blandly.

She said, hesitatingly, "Once or twice."

"Ah, once or twice! And will you tell me, madame," roared Tom, "how you account for your conduct in allowing a man whom you have seen once or twice to make you presents of jewelry?"

She could not account for it.

She had to answer innumerable questions, and she had to answer them quickly, before she had made up her mind what to say.

Had this man been to the house? —to his, Tom's, house, sneaking around when he was out? No, he had not. She swore it; she went on her knees and swore it, and began

to feel very frightened.

Where had she met him? When had she spoken to him? Never! She had never spoken to him! She had just happened to—to—to—to see him. Where had she seen him? She did not know; she could not remember. Out—just in the street—she meant just by chance, looking out of the window.

So Tom came to the conclusion that she had been conducting a vulgar flirtation from the window, and, declaring that she ought to be ashamed of herself, he went out to tell Mr. Wilkins, of 22 Madison Square, what he thought of him.

When Grace heard the door close, she flew down-stairs, and called him

"Oh, Tom, don't," she cried; "you must not. It is all nonsense!" And then, hysterically, between laughter and tears, she added: "Why, the man does not know me; he does not even know who I am."

"Do you mean to say," cried Tom, angrily, "that the fellow does not

know you are my wife?"

"No, no!" cried Grace, wildly; "he

has not the faintest idea of it."

"Well, the sooner he finds out, the better," said Tom, as he reëntered the house, slammed the door, and went up-stairs.

Grace sat down limply in the hall, and thought things over. She could imagine Fifine under the circumstances, going up-stairs and putting on an appropriate gown—something snaky and sinuous; doing her hair mysteriously in heavy bandeaux à la Paul Verlaine, or Duse, or Maeterlinck, or something—Grace's ideas were somewhat vague.

So she went up-stairs to dress for the part of the wicked, but beautiful, deceiver.

Meanwhile, her husband was in the sitting-room, packing up the ring and the flowers in a piece of newspaper, to send back to Mr. Wilkins.

Damn Mr. Wilkins!" he was saying to himself, as he put one of his wife's visiting-cards into the parcel. "Confound his cheek! I'll let him know that Mrs. Thomas Carrington does not accept presents from him. I'll teach this damned Wilkins a lesson!"

He gave the parcel to a servant, with instructions to take it to 22 Madison Square, and leave it there no answer.

Then he went down to dinner, somewhat relieved. He was not cross She looked very pretty to Grace. in a startling gown and strange coiffure, with contrastingly timid behavior. He was amazed by what had occurred, but he thought it best not to be cross to her.

Meanwhile, at 22 Madison Square, Mr. R. B. Wilkins came in, and found a parcel waiting for him. It contained a lady's visiting-card, some flowers and a ring.

"By Jove!" said Mr. Wilkins, "another conquest! I wonder what she is like. I'll go and call on her this

evening."

VI

THE ROSE AND THE RING

HE went. Tall and impeccable, in lavender kid gloves, the duplicate crescent of his golden mustache divinely arcuated, he presented himself and his visiting-card at Mr. Carrington's house that evening, at half-

past eight o'clock.

Mr. Carrington had gone out to his club, "for an hour." Mrs. Carrington was in the Brat's room, listening to the Brat's prayers. The Brat was very particular about her prayers. She prayed for many things and people—for all the governesses she had ever had; for all the dogs and cats and canaries she had ever owned: for people she met in the street, and for people she heard other people talk about. And, when she was particularly religious and aggravating, she prayed for every one of her school-teachers and schoolmates, calling them by name and making things last very long indeed.

She insisted that Grace should remain on her knees during the entire function and say amen at the end of

every prayer.

"And please God bless Emily Jones, and Katie Jones, and Mary Riker, and Madge Van Orden, and the other little Van Orden girl, whose name I have forgotten, but who has red hair, and Baby Griggs, and Cecily Martin, even though she did draw the man in the moon smoking a pipe on my copybook, which I had to show to Miss Courtney, and she said that, if I ever had the audacity to present such a copy-book again—

"Go on with your prayers," said Grace, from her knees near the bed, raising a flushed face from her hands, "and don't be irrelevant."

"Amen," quickly said the Brat, who wanted to lie down and think out something horrible to do to Cecily Martin.

"Amen," said Grace, rising from her knees, and bending over to kiss the child.

Collins, the house-maid, appeared at the door with a card in her hand. "A gentleman to see you, ma'am; Mr.

Wilkins, if you please.''

Grace stood aghast for a moment. Then, with a little gasp of relief, she told Collins to let him wait in the drawing-room. She hastened to her room, and glanced at herself in the long mirror. She was sorry that she had the snaky dress and the symbolistic coiffure; but, as she really did look very pretty and odd, she determined not to make any change. She would glide into the presence of Mr. Wilkins, and, pale but composed, get the ring back from him, telling him quietly that it had been sent by mistake.

She got as far as the gliding in, but she was neither pale nor composed when the gentleman in the drawingroom, after staring at her with bated breath and an expression of ineffable tenderness and admiration, stepped forward with both hands outstretched.

and uttered:

"Ah, beauteous one!"

Grace was thunderstruck. are—you Mr. Wilkins?" she stam-

mered, with a very red face.

"Oh, will you not call me Weggie?" said the gentleman, moving close to her and grasping one of her hands. As he did so, Grace in the mirror caught sight of Collins, passing through the hall and glancing into the room.

"Merciful heavens!" she faltered, as she dragged her hand from Mr. Wil-

kins's clasp.

But he was undeterred. He took her hand again, and, bending down close to her face, asked her not to "shwink" from him, and insisted upon her sitting down on the sofa and tell-

ing him how it all came about.

She said, "Sir!" repeatedly and indignantly, but he paid not the slightest attention, and was very gentle and firm, saying: "Nevah mind! I understand. I will not huwwy you," until she felt that she was going to be hysterical.

So they sat on the sofa, and Mr. Wilkins held her hand, and asked her questions.

"Tell me all," he said; "tell it to

me in your own way."

But he did not give her a chance to say anything, for he continued: "Shall I help you to tell me? Was it not my last volume of poems, 'The Laurel and the Wose,' that cwept into your heart and made it thwob for me? Was it not?"

Grace, speechless and infuriated, tried to wriggle her hand away from

his. "Sir!" she began again.

"S-sh!" he said, with maddening gentleness. "Don't, dearwest! Not the poems, you say? Then you were at my last lecture, 'On the Fastidiousness of Beauty and the Beauty of Fastidiousness! Ah," and he cast his handsome eyes up to the ceiling, "I felt that I was penetwating the sensitive soul of Woman that day! I felt it!"

"Will you please," began Grace, swallowing a lump in her throat, "will you please—I shall ring the bell," she

ended, faintly.

"What a shwinking sweet!" said Mr. Wilkins, laying his disengaged hand over hers. And there, on his little finger, shone Rosenstein's ruby ring.

"That ring!" burst out Grace. "I

want that ring back!"

Mr. Wilkins raised deep, reproach-

ful eyes to hers.

"Nevah!" he exclaimed, in a low voice; "nevah! I tweasure this token, this unmistakable token of your affection, as I tweasure my life. Your woses I cawwy here," and he unfastened his coat, showing two crumpled roses, from the bunch that Fifine had bought, pinned to his waistcoat.

"This little wuby wing I shall wear until bweath ceases!"

Grace looked at him with hatred growing large and bitter in her heart. This man, this horrible man, who sat near her, holding her hand, wearing her ring, not letting her speak, insisting that she loved him, was costing her sixty dollars, and to-morrow would cost her forty dollars more. She would have to pay Rosenstein those forty dollars, and she would have made a present of a ring to this insulting, this insufferable person!

She wrenched her hand away, and, in an agony of mortification, with the tears starting to her eyes, cried: "You sha'n't! I want the ring back. I don't know you. I don't want to know you! I am miserable and

ashamed!"

Here she burst into tears, and stood, small and pathetic, in her snaky dress and symbolistic coiffure, before him.

He was touched. He stood up and put his hand around her shoulders, in a kindly and consoling manner.

"You funny little girl," he said, "you mustn't cwy. I understand you; I understand you so well! These things are always happening to me, always!" And he paused, gazing at her compassion. "I benevolent know how you feel about it. You did it under the impulse of iwesistible emotion, and, now that I am here, you feel shy and unhappy. But you will get over that. Believe me, sweet one, that I am deeply appweciative, and that I would not wound your twembling heart for worlds—not for worlds!"

Quivering and indignant, Grace drew

herself up.

"My husband, sir," she began, "I

have a husband who——'

"I know, I know. You need not explain," interrupted Mr. Wilkins. "The old stowy! I have seen so much of it! Husband, howwid old bwute, I suppose, neglects charming wife. Charming wife weads my poems, sees me, hears me speak to the tendewest fibres of her delicate soul, is impwessed, is penetwated, is thwilled!—sends me a wose and a wuby wing—

what could be pwettier, what could be sweeter, what could be tendewer?"

"Go away! go away!" cried Grace. "Don't speak to me any more; go

away!" And she rang the bell.

"I will wespect your wishes," said Mr. Wilkins, with gentle gravity; "I understand you." And, taking his perfect cane and his irreproachable hat, he bowed over her hand, and kissed it.

"I—I will write and explain," said Grace, feeling suddenly in the wrong.

"I know you will wite," said the gentleman, as he went toward the door. "My shwinking little bird, farewell. Fear nothing; I shall see you to-morrow."

Collins, rigid and correct, with proper, downcast eyelids, stood in the hall, and showed the gentleman out.

"Collins! My cloak and hat-

quick!" gasped Grace.

Collins did not answer.

"Did you hear me?" cried Grace.

"Yes, ma'am," said Collins, with thin, compressed lips and acid looks, as she went up-stairs.

Grace took a cab, and drove to Fifine's house. Fifine came out of her bedroom, with loosened hair and many exclamations of surprise.

"I was just going to bed, dear," she said. "What has happened?"

"Fifine," panted Grace, "you know a man called Wilkins?—a conceited, horrible, insolent puppy—an unspeakably impertinent and idiotic creature!"

"You will kindly leave the house,"

said Fifine, with flashing eyes.

"What?" exclaimed Grace.

"Leave this house," repeated Fifine.
"Go away at once, and never speak
to me again!"

"Why, what have I done?" sobbed Grace, utterly broken. "What is it?

What have I said?"

"You know what you have said," cried Fifine, shrilly; "and am I to stand here and listen to you? and let you vituperate Reginald, my Reginald? Go away, and never come here again!"

Drooping and dejected, Grace let herself into the house, and, as she was about to go up-stairs, she heard Collins talking to the cook and the scullery-maid in the hall below.

"Yes," said Collins; "he was a blarsted Englishman. And they sat in the drawing-room all night, holding hands."

"Nonsense," said the cook.

"You don't say," said the scullery-maid.

"Then she cried and carried on awful," continued Collins, "until he promised that he'd come again tomorrow, and told her she might write to him every day."

"Disgustin'!" said the cook.

"Sickenin'!" said the scullery-maid.

VII

THE WOMAN OF THE BILL OF FARE

Grace arose next morning, a wreck. A rapid mental review of the situation made her groan and cover her face with her hands. Tom was frigid to her; the servants despised her; Fifine had quarreled with her; Wilkins had made love to her—Wilkins was Reginald; she owed forty dollars to Rosenstein; and nobody would listen to any explanations.

Even if they had listened, she would not have known how to begin to

explain.

She had to explain things to every-body. How could she tell Fifine that "her Reginald" had held her hands all the evening and called her "shwinking sweet," and "bird," and things, without arousing Fifine's horrid French temper, which—she remembered from their schooldays—always meant a great deal of clawing and screaming?—let alone having to explain how she had rummaged through Fifine's satchel, and used her friend's visiting-cards for her own purposes.

How was she to explain to Tom that she had told any number of falsehoods, about seeing Wilkins from the window, and all that?—let alone the humiliation of having to confess that nobody had sent her jewels, or flowers, or anything.

How was she to explain to the servants that it really did not mean anything, if she had sat in the drawing-room and wept, with a strange man's arms around her shoulders?

So she sat down and wished every-

body was dead.

Tom, who had had a hurried and uncomfortable breakfast, alone with the Brat—she had spilt everything over the tablecloth and had been generally unpleasant—found Grace sitting, dejectedly, in her dressing-room, and, being a large, comfortable man, his heart smote him.

"What's the matter, Gracie?" he asked, although he knew, or thought he knew, exactly what the matter was. She was penitent. She was longing to weep in his arms, to tell him that she had never in her heart wronged him, or cared for Wilkins.

Grace raised a pale face, and said:

"I want forty dollars."

"Oh," said Tom, icily; and, with hardening countenance, he put the money on the table and left the room.

"Brute!" sobbed Grace. "Why did he not ask me what I wanted it for? I should have told him everything."

Unable to bear the strain any longer, she ran down-stairs, to call him back. But he had left the house; and, after weeping fifteen minutes at the window, Grace went up to her room again.

The money was gone. On the table lay a penciled note from the Brat.

I have taken the money to take to school to show to Cecily Martin to make her sick. She thinks her old pa has all the money in the world—she is so vulgar! I shall bring it home all right, except for some marshmallows.

Your affectionate sister.

Grace fell on her bed, and laughed the laugh of despair and of hysterics. Then she dressed and sat down to await events.

The first event was Wilkins, who arrived with a large box of Maillard's

bon-bons, and insisted on sitting down-stairs in the drawing-room and waiting for her.

She said to herself: "I will tell him all, and get the ring back." So she was going down, when she heard Rosenstein's voice in the hall below.

"Mrs. Carrington? I must see her

at vunce—on beesiness."

She heard Collins showing him into the drawing-room, and her heart beat faster as she faltered down the stairs. She was on the second landing, when she heard a key in the hall door, and, stopping, saw her husband come in. She thought he looked angry and suspicious.

Collins was loitering about the hall. "Oh, sir, I was just going up-stairs to tell madame that the gentleman was here," she said.

"What gentleman?" inquired Mr.

Carrington.

"The gentleman what was here with madame all last evening," remarked the maid, with prim, pinched lips; "a Mr. Wilkins, as I believe, sir."

Tom turned and went straight to the drawing-room. Grace leaned against the banisters, and felt faint.

On entering the room, Tom was confronted with Rosenstein's engaging bow and plausible beard. Wilkins remained seated on the sofa, holding the box of candy.

"I vished to see Mrs. Carrington," said Rosenstein, quickly; "I vished to see her, particularly."

"What for?" asked Tom.

"Oh, a leetle private matter," said Rosenstein. "She hat from me a ring yesterday, a ruby ring."

"Oh, you gave her the ring, did you?" said Tom, putting his hands

in his pockets.

"I tit," said Rosenstein.

Tom looked him up and down, with unutterable scorn. "Well, Mr. Wilkins," he said—there was a slight perturbation on the sofa—"you got your ring back—and I am the lady's husband!"

Tom expected this declaration to produce a startling effect, but he was unprepared for the wild anger and

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amazement that spread over his in-

terlocutor's countenance.

"Vaht? vaht?" stuttered Rosenstein. "I care not whose huspant you are. I got dat ring back, vaht you say? And vaht is Vilkins? eh, vaht? Gott im Himmel!"

"I say, Mr. Wilkins, that you are a cad and a blackguard, and that I am

going to break your head."

Mr. Wilkins arose from the sofa. "I beg your pardon," he said. "I think

there is some mistake."

"Vaht mistake?" blustered Rosenstein. "Dis man try to cheat me. He ant his wife are tiefs. He call me Vilkins, and try to cheat me. There is the voman! there!" And Rosenstein pointed a bony and awful finger at the door, where Grace had appeared, and stood white and trembling.

"Silence!" roared Tom, and turned to Grace. "Is this the man you got

the ring from, madame?"

"Does she deny, does she dare to deny it?" questioned Rosenstein of his gods, wildly wringing his hands.

"Is this Wilkins?" continued Tom.

"Answer me."

"No," faltered Grace; and Wilkins

took another step forward.

"Will you allow me?" he said, with raised hand.

Rosenstein uttered a shrill cry, and pointed to Wilkins's finger. "Dere's de ring! dere's my ruby ring, vaht you owe me de balance on, and vaht you say you returned, you many tiefs!"

A moment of dead silence followed, as Tom's astonished eyes rested on Wilkins's little finger.

"Where did you get that from?" he asked; "and what are you doing here? Who are you?"

"My name—er—is Wilkins—er—

and I---"

"Stop!" shouted Tom. "Then who is this?" and he pointed to Rosenstein, who was pulling quickly at his beard, in a frenzy of excitement.

"Oh, Tom, dear! Tom!" cried Grace. "Wait a minute—let me explain. We are so mixed up!"

"You mix yourselfs up because you are tiefs, dat's vaht!" exclaimed Rosenstein. "You vant to steal de ring."

"What is he talking about?" said Tom. "Who is he? What are all these men doing in my house? Who gave you that ring, sir?" he said,

turning angrily on Wilkins.

"Well—er—" said Wilkins, "I—er—wegwet to say that—er—this lady pwesented it to me. If," he added, with an increased drawl, and twirling his large mustache, "if this is a badgeah game you are playing on me, how much do you want, and let us have done with it!"

Tom was dumfounded. Rosenstein, who had never left off talking, here raised his voice again: "You tiefs, dis is all a put-up jop to steal from me my ruby ring. I haf you all

arrested."

The bell had rung, and Collins had shown in Fifine, who remained standing just within the door, listening, without any one of the excited party in the drawing-room having noticed her.

But Rosenstein's eager eye now

lighted on Fifine, and he cried:

"Dere is de oder voman, de oder crook, de oder tief!"

At these words, Tom made a plunge forward, and seized Rosenstein by the collar.

"What do you mean?" he said, shaking him; "what do you mean?"

"I mean dat I haf you all arrested," croaked Rosenstein, "for stealing my goots and detaining my person vile I miss a sale. Gott im Himmel, I miss a sale!" he added, wildly, wringing his hands.

"What do you want?" roared Tom.
"I vahnt my ring back, or de balance of de money, dat's vaht I vahnt," he replied.

"Oh, Tom! pay him," sobbed Grace; "it is only forty dollars."

"Tree hahndred and feefty dahlars," shouted Rosenstein; "not one cent less, or I haf you all arrested. You, madame," he said to Grace, "for gifing away my goots, and you all for

keeping stolen goots, and for violence to my person."

"Is this your wing?" asked Wilkins, slowly awakening to the fact.

"Why, take it—and get out!"

He threw the ring on the table. Rosenstein seized it, and held it up against the light. Then he placed it on the table again.

"I refuse," he said. "I haf missed de sale. And, besides "-a wicked grin crept over his face, his eyes gleamed, and his nose curved down over his mouth—"you haf changed de stone."

"What!" cried Grace and Wilkins

together.

Dat's vaht I say; you haf changed de stone," quoth Rosenstein, smiling complacently. "Dat's no ruby; dat's a piece of glass. Tree hahndred and feefty dahlars, or you all go

to jail."

In vain did Grace mention the sixty dollars paid on account. indignant demands for enlightenment were unheeded; and, while Fifine talked to everybody in excited French, Mr. Wilkins bought the ring for three hundred and fifty dollars.

"You haf a bargain," said the jeweler, as he folded the cheque and put it away in a greasy pocket-book; a bargain, I say. De ruby alone—

vaht?"

"Get out," said Wilkins.

Rosenstein hurried to the door. There he turned around, and, showing all his teeth, "De ruby alone," he said, "as a vahnderful imitation is vorth—" but Wilkins put him outside, and shut the door.

When Wilkins turned around, Fifine was holding out to him his hat in one hand and the box of bon-bons in the Tom was speaking to Grace in a low voice, near the window.

"Is this yours?" Fifine asked, hold-

ing up the box of sweets.

No, deahwest, it is yours," said Reginald. "And so is this, if you will do me the honor," and he slipped the ruby ring on her finger.

Fifine laughed. Then she tucked her arm under his, and walked him

out of the room.

"But we have not said good-bye," Reginald suggested.

"Never mind; we can say good-bye

when we come back," said she.

"Well, my deah Fifine, I-ershould like to make a clean bweast of something," said Reginald, when they were in the street. "I like making clean bweasts of things, don't you know."

"You angel!" said Fifine; "you nice, English angel. Go ahead!"

And he went ahead.

And she went with him, arm in arm—for all time.

In Mr. Carrington's house that afternoon, there were explanations.

"I hope, dear," said Tom, "that you will not win me back any more. It upsets things so!"

"Oh, Tom! Tom! It was all the fault

of the Woman of the Bill of Fare."

"Of the who?" said Tom, with his hand to his head.

Grace went to her room, and fetched the pièce d'accusation.

"This—this is an immoral bill of fare," she sobbed. "Fifine said so."

And, while Tom looked at it, she continued:

"To think that, when you were in Paris last time, you should have been so bad, so—so—improper!"

"It was not last time; it was the

time before," said Tom.
"What!" cried Grace, "on our

h-honeymoon trip?"

"Yes, dear," said her husband. "The second day, I believe."

"Oh, Tom!" said Grace.

"A most immoral," began Tom, "a most improper—" but his wife's hand was over his mouth, and he could do nothing but kiss it.

She had laid her pretty, flushing face on his shoulder, and her arms were about his neck, when, raising her eyes, she saw the Brat standing in the doorway. The Brat was not jeering or making faces at her, so she knew that something must be wrong, even before she noticed that the Brat's face was scratched and tear-stained.

"What is it, Brat, darling?" she

asked, leaving her husband, and going

to meet the child.

"Here's the change," said the Brat, drearily, holding out a two-dollar bill and four cents in a very dirty hand, "from the forty dollars."

"Gracious!" said her sister. "What

have you done with the rest?"

The Brat bellowed.

"Cecily Martin got it," she howled; "and three dollars' worth of marshmallows, and the two nigger dolls, and all the other things I bought, and all the money—and everything." She screamed very loudly, and would not be comforted.

"Never mind, darling," said Grace; "you shall have a lot more of everything. Don't cry."

"No, don't cry," said Tom.

They had a very happy dinner.

"I bet that Martin girl was sick, all the same," said the Brat. "And I did pull out a lot of her hideous hair," she added, taking a small paper parcel out of the front of her dress. "Here it is!"



TO A SINGER

I CARE not what she sang, And I care not what she said; But her voice was a bell that rang, that rang From the land of the great and dead.

Should man's first fathers sing,
Then had they found a voice
Traveling up from the deeps of Time,
And bidding Death rejoice!

Over the primal hills,
And over the seas of Fate,
Journeys the sweet, clear, level voice,
And knocks at the Muse's gate.

I care not what she sang,
And I care not what she said;
But her voice was a bell that rang, that rang
From the land of the dear and dead!

VICTOR PLARR.



INNOCENT

FARMER—Here, you little rascal, what are you doing in my apple-tree? Boy—Who, me? Just botanizin', that's all.

COA

AFTER MANY YEARS

"HOW did she come to marry an old bachelor?" "She couldn't get him any sooner."

THE QUEEN'S SONG

By Theodosia Garrison

THIS is the song the King Cophetua
Heard 'neath her casement, as the morning broke,
And the white dawn came rolling in like smoke
From altars where the priestly sun hath sway.

These are the words the King Cophetua

Heard all his lifetime sound through jest and song,
Thrill through his dreaming when the nights were long,
And make a mirthless melody of day;

The song he held as some red wound that stirs Forever in the torn breast where it lies, That tortured life and made, at last, the eyes Of very death seem lovelier than hers.

"Soft is the king's white hand as down, Feeble his arms as silken thong; Oh, but the gypsy's face was brown, The gypsy's arms were strong!

"His eyes were bluer than the day, Purple with shadows as the night; The open earth was ours to stray— The highways of delight.

"We were the comrades of the sun, Brother and sister of the rain; The high, white moon when day was done Claimed us as mates again.

"My hair the wayside rose might bind, Its thorn my tattered gown could hold; We were the playmates of the wind, The comrades of the wold.

"Fair feasts he gained from brook and tree— He fed my heart a food divine; The words of him were bread to me, His kisses were as wine.

"In the gold garden of the sun
All day our joy went singing thus,
And night by night the witch moon spun
Her white tent over us.

"A beggar lass and lover bold, Ragged our raiment, as was meet, But our Love walked in cloth of gold, And golden-shod his feet.

"Why should a king's eyes know me fair? Why should a king's eyes find me good? Why should a king's will bid me bear Weight of his kinglihood?

"Across the crowd my eyes caught his, Across the crowd he came to me, Strange-colored as a great wave is, Resistless as the sea.

"He raised my face to meet his gaze, His fingers lingered in my hair; His smile beat down my hot amaze, And left white terror there.

"The gypsy's hand fell cold from mine
What time the king's hand touched my own;
Slow-stepped along the shouting line,
He drew me to his throne.

"They brought me royal robes to wear, They gave me curious food and sweet; They bound red jewels in my hair, White samite on my feet.

"Beggar and king we knelt to priest;
The censor swung, the heralds cried;
High-throned they served us at the feast—
A queen at a king's side!

"Strange that a great queen needs must keep A beggar's heart within her breast; Strange, when a queen lies down to sleep, A beggar's dreams mock rest.

"Strange that a great queen's thought may creep Down dusty highways of old years; Strange that a queen's cold eyes should weep A beggar's burning tears.

"I—only I—the truth may know, Beggar and bound, who once had been Free of the wind and sun and snow, Of very love the queen. "What though I go in cloth of gold, What though my bread is fine and sweet, When Love stands starving in the cold, With naked head and feet!

"Soft the king's eyes and dull of mien, Cold the king's face as one long dead. Oh, but the gypsy's eyes were keen, The gypsy's lips were red!

"We were the comrades of the air, Brother and sister to the wood. Why should a king's eyes know me fair, A king's eyes find me good?"

This is the song the King Cophetua Heard 'neath her casement, as the morning broke.



THEIR FORTUNATE ESCAPE

THEY had walked half-way through the Park at a smart pace, and she now sank on a shaded bench; he seated himself beside her. They were entirely alone, save for an old man at one end of their seat, immersed in a book. Their agitated conversation continued.

"Oh, it is too dreadful!" she shuddered, covering her face with her hands,

as if to shut out some unbearable sight.

"Fearful!" he agreed, deeply moved and mopping the profuse perspiration from his brow.

"Horrible!" she added. "I cannot bear to think of it. The loss of hope,

happiness, perhaps even life itself---"

"Hush!" he interrupted, gently. "Let us strive to think of it no more,

or it may grow to prey upon our minds."

"Pardon me," said the old man on the end of the bench, his watery eyes distended in lively apprehension; "has there been some awful disaster? Have you been forced to look upon some awful tragedy?"

The young couple regarded each other in some confusion. Hesitatingly,

the youth answered:

"No, sir. You see, we have just become engaged, and we were talking of what a calamity it would have been had we never met."

H. G.



PROVING HIS STATEMENT

HEWITT—Don't you remember me, old man?

JEWETT—Certainly not; if I had remembered you, I should have avoided you.



CROWNED

HIS love, his queen! So am I blessed and crowned, So from the rest of mortals set apart, Enthroned upon the dais of his heart, Love's golden fillet on my forehead bound; So rich with wealth, of which, the whole world round, Since time began, has been no counterpart— World-weary souls have nature searched, and art. For aught as good, and, weeping, have not found.

I am as others to the heedless throng That sees me but a woman, loving, loved, And pauses not for word or wondering; Yet all the day I hear an endless song. And know an endless rapture, far removed, In my dear kingdom, with my lover-king! NANNIE BYRD TURNER.



THE WORM TURNED

HE loved her devotedly. He was also bow-legged. Both facts gave him pain at times.

He passed it by with a rueful smile, when she merrily said that his affliction gave him such an arch look, and that, after all, he was a pretty good sort when you got on to his curves. He bore it patiently, when she referred to his walk as his parenthetical progress. But he rebelled, and broke the engagement, when she called her pet dog through the wicket formed by his legs. "I may not be so overly ornamental," said he, "but I emphatically

object to being made useful, so unseasonably early in the game!"



MANY VARIETIES

TREE is known by its fruit," said Hojack.
"Especially a Christmas tree," added Tomdik.



TOO GREAT A SHOCK

DATIENT—Doctor, I would like to have your bill. Physician—You had better wait until you are a little stronger.

THE EXPLORER

By Mary Tracy Earle

ORE times than the child could remember, the family had said to her, "Stella, you must never go near Brook Pastures, for the people there are not nice;" and she had obeyed to the extent of never going near the house. As for the pastures themselves, lying on either side of the brook and far below the house, she had not thought that they counted; for there were no bad people in the pastures, only cows, which, of all animals, are least likely to corrupt the manners of a child.

But there came a morning when she heard the family talking together, and learned that the bad people's house had been bought for Gertrude and Rossiter. Gertrude was the child's sister, and Rossiter had suddenly become Gertrude's husband—a circumstance that gave the whole family a right to help him plan what next he wished to do. The family had decided to send him to the bad people's house, with Gertrude; Stella fancied it was as a sort of punishment for having married without saying so beforehand, and she wondered if that was what the bad people had done, and if now they had said they were sorry, and could go away. But nobody acted as if it were a punishment, unless it was the child's grandmama, who drew a long face, and said that she disliked to see a young couple begin life in such a tainted atmosphere. The head of the house had frowned at that, and had said, "Nonsense! As soon as the premises are vacant, there'll be no atmosphere left in them." And Stella, who could not have defined atmosphere, wondered if the bad people were going to compress it and carry it away in their trunks; and, if so, how?

Naturally, her mind ran on Brook Pastures all day long, and, where her mind ran, her feet were apt to follow soon. At first, they went only to the brook, and active feet could follow as far as that in a half-hour's dash, all the way down hill from the big house where she lived. It was convenient for Stella to live on a hill; for, when she was leaving home on errands of her own, she had to do scarcely more than go to the brow of the hill and look off, and the force of gravity would draw her down. As for going back, considering the tone which the family usually took toward her when she arrived, she thought it was just as well to walk a trifle slow.

She could remember the very day when she had discovered the country threaded by the brook. It had been a solemn morning. There were painters in the big house, and outside fell a soft, Spring rain. The head of the family took a train for town. Gertrude was driven over to a friend's to spend the day. Mama shut herself into a room with a headache and a maid, and grandmama said, "Stella, you may play in my room, if you will be quiet," and Stella had sat in grandmama's room as quiet as a mouse, but she had not played; for her fancies were her playfellows, and, with grandmama in the room, they could do no more than peep out through Stella's eyes, and scurry back. The gray moments dragged along, and somebody called grandmama to give an opinion on kalsomine or varnish or paint. Stella thought it would be refreshing to slip downstairs and take a breath, and, just as she put her head out of doors, the clouds broke, and the sun shone through. The rain was done, and it was on account of the rain that she had been shut in. People with such clear reasoning powers must ever be a law unto themselves—particularly, when the sun shines after rain.

Perhaps, she had left the hill before she knew; perhaps, she was aware that anywhere on the slopes commanded by the house her small figure would have been as visible as if her height had been seven feet; perhaps, it was the glint of sunshine on the brook, showing for the first time through a gap where a bit of hillside woodland had been cleared away. The child ran so swiftly that, when grandmama went up-stairs again, Stella had reached a new, low-lying country, where all the flowers were different from the flowers on the hill, and each step revealed something as strange and wonderful as grown-up people find in foreign lands.

She had always intended to complete her survey by visiting the house, but, before her expeditions had reached so far, the edict went forth against Brook Pastures, and, in her scheme of things, the house became the inaccessible fastness of an unknown tribe, around whose boundaries she explored. The pastures, with their caches of sorrel and Spring-beauty bulbsburied provision to be dug for in time of hunger—were full of the dim trails of her feet, and to-day, when her thoughts reached them, she merely planned to inspect all her routes, and get near enough to the house, perhaps, to see if its inhabitants were busy packing up their atmosphere.

No one knew how virtuous it was of Stella never to have been quite up to the house, for, in her own mind, it would have been wise to take a survey of the bad people, and find out the differences between them and people who were "nice." Now, as she followed her thoughts, she circled nearer and nearer, curious about the re-

moval of the breathing material, and aware that her chances of learning the earmarks of badness were growing slender; because, though she had looked in the mirror for them sometimes, after the family had reproved her, by the time she had grown interested in seeing them they had always disappeared. But, with these people, they must be permanent.

The whole place was so still that suddenly she decided she was too late, that the people had already moved away. In that case, the house was simply Gertrude's house, and, of course, to go up close and look at it was the most natural thing in the world

It was low, with deep porches latticed in waist high. A mysterious, dusky coolness seemed to fill them, but the roof burned in the sunlight, except where vivid leaf-shadows played over She stole across the grassy lawn, as if, by going very softly, she could slip away from the sense of silence and strangeness which, now and then, caught at her feet. It was only when she reached the steps of the porch that she saw she had made a mistake. place was not deserted. A man and a woman were sitting behind the lattice-work. The woman was leaning back in a lounging-chair; her eyes were closed, but they had not shut out an expression of despair from her Her hands clasped the chairface. arms, tightly. The ruffles on her bosom rose and fell with her quick breathing, and, even while the child stood mute and confused, a tear escaped from under each closed eyelid and ran down the woman's cheeks.

The man was watching her, and drumming with noiseless fingers on the lattice. When he saw the tears, he leaned forward. He had a heavy face, but the sagged lines about his mouth twitched.

"What do you want me to do, Millicent?" he asked. "Carson has put me in the devil of a hole. If I take you away from him and go off somewhere, my business will go to smash, and we'll have nothing to live

on-and we couldn't face it out here. You've got to make your peace with him, and throw me over—that's all I see."

The woman's hands tightened on the chair. For a while she said nothing; then she opened her eyes slowly to look at him, but, instead, gave a little cry and sat upright, seeing the child.

The man turned, sharply. are you here for? What do you want?" he asked. He got to his feet and stood over Stella. She shrank back and, by some instinct, turned her frightened face toward the woman.

"I—I don't want anything," she said.

"Then what are you here for?" the man repeated.

The woman cried, "Hush!" and held out a hand to the child.

"Come here and talk to me," she said. "Aren't you the little girl I see down in the pasture sometimes, wandering about?"

Stella nodded, but did not stir.

"Come here," the woman repeated,

with a queer thrill in her voice.

The man sat down again. went timidly forward. She was frightened, for these were the bad people, and, now that she was really face to face with them, she began to wonder if people who were not nice might not do most disagreeable things to a child who intruded on them. She looked furtively from one to the other to see the earmarks of badness. Whatever they were, they were puzzling, for the two faces were not in the least With her eyes open, the woman was pleasant to look at, although she was so thin—thinner than Stella herself. She had big, dark eyes, with a soul in them; Stella did not call it a soul, yet she felt it as she looked, and she knew that it was sad. It was the soul of a woman who had tried to think her life her own, to do as she pleased with, and had failed to convince herself. It was the soul of a woman who could neither resign herself to life's sacrifices, nor blind herself to the slow decay that sets in with selfishness.

But the child could see only the longing and the sorrow in the face, and she concluded that this woman had been bad without knowing it, and so, perhaps, had missed having the earmarks come to stay.

As for the man, he was like Rossiter's bulldog, and no one called the bulldog bad—indeed, he was becoming a great pet in the family, in spite of the disagreeable expression around his eyes and mouth. Evidently, it was a difficult business, looking for earmarks, and none the less difficult that the man's face kept stirring nervously, as if, behind an exterior so altered from the human type, there was still something in him that was quickly sympathetic, high-keyed and capable of Stella had never seen Rossiter's bulldog when he seemed unhappy. Yet, surely, unhappiness could not be the sign she wished. She would have liked to ask them if they had ever looked in the glass carefully enough to know what the marks were.

The woman put one thin arm around the child, and drew her up close beside the chair. "And what do you do down in the pasture?" she asked.

Stella stood very straight, and a point of color glowed in each of her brown cheeks. She was not used to telling people what she did when she came out on these errands of her own.

"I-play," she answered; and her big, near-sighted eyes let their gaze

slip to the floor.

All alone?" the woman went on. The question seemed to mean more to her than to the child, and she continued, protestingly, "How could you play alone?"

Stella glanced from right to left. There was no deliverer in sight, and, after all, torture of some sort was what one must expect when one invaded an inaccessible fastness. "I make believe there are people with me," she confessed, "sometimes."

"How wise!" the woman commented, and bit her lips. She looked across at the man, but, as he failed to meet her eyes, she turned back to the chill "I've watched you down there,"

said. "I wish you would tell me what

it is you play."

If Stella had only dared to run, they would have seen that an explorer learns to be fleet of foot, but the woman's arm held her, and so did the woman's eyes. The child felt herself flushing hotly.

"I go to places I don't know," she murmured. "I try to find new countries, like—like—" Her breath failed and her eyes fell. She knew that, if she likened her poor make-believe to the romance and the glory of discovery, as she read of it in books, her listeners would smile.

It was then that the man, without looking up, said, "Here comes Carson!"

The woman seemed to straighten and stiffen in her chair, and the arm that held Stella drew her closer. "Ah," she said, softly; and they all listened—the child with a sudden, blind-

ing, inexplicable fear.

The sound of hoof-beats on a gravelpath reached them. After a moment. a man rode into sight, jumped from his horse, and, leaving it to crunch the short grass, came rather slowly toward the porch. Though young, his face had been graven into many lines. Stella was too unreasoningly tremulous to look for earmarks in it, and, perhaps, if she had looked, she would not have recognized the signs of wilfulness, of extreme indulgence of a nature too crystalline, too completed and narrow and hard to be gross, of an overweening pride and a great disregard for any rights but his own. He was tall and slender, and, in spite of his slow step, his bearing might have been called Reckless it certainly was reckless. of other people.

When he reached the porch, he sat down on one of the steps, and, with a deliberate gaze, took note, first of the woman's face, then of the man's. The child he no more seemed to see than if she had been her own small, invisible

"I seem to be in time to wish you a pleasant journey," he said, including them both with a smile that lighted up new vistas of unpleasantness in his thoughts.

The woman's eyes met his, and the child felt the arm that clasped her tremble. At first, not a word was said in reply, but, out of the woman's face, her troubled soul looked and pleaded, without abasement, yet with a complete laying-by of pride—pleaded not for love, but for mercy, for protection, for mere shelter, perhaps.

Then her words came, simply enough, but shaken: "We have been talking over what you said to me. We had never dreamed you cared in this way. We thought you were glad to be left—more free to do as you pleased. We are willing to make any amends we can. Nothing has been what it seemed. At the worst, it has been—an experiment that failed."

The extreme bitterness in her voice, as she spoke the last sentence, left a hush behind it. The man with the bulldog face gave her a glance that encompassed her strangely, but retreated. There was a defiant embarrassment on him, which he threw off with difficulty.

"Carson, you're giving us a bad quarter of an hour," he declared. "If you think I have trespassed on my privileges as your friend, I apologize, and, if that is not enough, I am willing to take my congé, and bear no malice."

The woman caught a sharp breath, and her free hand went up to her heart. "You hear him?" she asked. "He has meant nothing—nothing in the world."

There was a pause, and Stella, with her gaze fixed on the newcomer, collected herself enough to wonder if this were not the face she had been looking for, in which the signs of badness had been written large. Perhaps the hard traces, which led from the smile of the lips to the look that was like pleasure in the eyes, were among the marks she must remember. She trembled, and felt a new terror pass into her; she could not have told from what cause.

The newcomer clasped his hands

around his knees, and leaned toward the heavier man.

"There is an old adage to the effect that one cannot eat his cake—and have it," he said, slowly; "but some people, it seems, do not want to have it. The case is different with one whose cake has been eaten by some one else. There is no choice as to what he shall do. He must sweep out the crumbs. The other can gather them up, or not, as he thinks best."

The heavy man got to his feet. "By heaven, Carson, you're crazy, unless you're working for your own ends," he cried. "You take up a handful of mere nothings, and draw conclusions from them that would cost you your life in any other country than this. For the love of decency, if you have any such thing left in you—"

"Hush!" the woman cried. Only she, out of all of them, realized that this was a strange discussion before so young an auditor. She glanced at Stella, and rose, still with her nervous clasp around the child. needless for you to argue, or to quarrel," she said to the two men. "It's too late for either of you to meddle with my life any more. You needn't toss it back and forth between you, each feeling that the other must accept the burden of it. I-I have my own uses for it. You may be quite free from anxiety, both of you."

As she spoke, certain of the lines of tension in her face seemed to be eased, while other lines settled and took direction, bringing, out of the desolate hopelessness of her expression, a look almost rapt.

"I have been such a coward," she went on, looking from one man to the other, as if a great space had suddenly been set between her and them. "All my life I have been just like both of you. I have been doing as I pleased, and trying to pass the consequences on to some one else; but now—oh, I have to thank you both for having taught me a great deal! I have begged first one of you

and then the other for help, for mercy and protection; and both of you, my husband and the man who claimed to love me, have turned away. I was desperate, ready to do things far worse than I have done, rather than face the world by myself; and neither of you was ready to take the trouble, or the risk, of helping me to be better—or be worse." lips quivered, and she walked across the porch and down the steps, leading the child. At the bottom, she turned, and the soul that Stella had seen in her eyes looked out of them, bidding the two men good-bye. Then Stella found herself hurried across the lawn, until a bank of shrubbery hid the house.

The child did not know what had happened. She was trying to see the wonders of the world, but with eyes too near-sighted to see far, and all her heart had gone out in championship to the woman at her side. She wished to protect and comfort her —to say to her, "If they are not good to you, come home with me." there was an obstacle to such a speech. The family would understand that the two men were the bad people, not the woman. They would still think she was "not nice." They would wish to have all her clothes hung out on a line, perhaps, and beaten, to make sure that none of the old atmosphere clung to them; and the child flushed with shame for their denseness and their inhospitality. She gazed up into the woman's face, and touched her.

The woman looked down, blankly; then she smiled, with great tenderness. "You poor little child," she murmured; "you poor little child!" She would have liked to tell Stella that she was in no danger from hunger, or from cold, or from any of the things that to her mind made up a child's idea of suffering. She would have liked to say that she was merely planning to travel to a place she did not know; that she had wakened, sharply, to the need of finding a new

country; that the way to it was strange and hard, and she must find it all alone.

Puzzled anxiety filled the child's face. A sense of surrounding difficulties beset her—difficulties that prevented her from helping this woman, whose wordless champion she had become.

Perhaps, around the woman, too, the obstacles, between her life as it had been and as she wished it to be. were beginning to grow active, and to menace; perhaps, it was the thought that she must part from this little comrade, who looked up at her with such faith, and go back to reproach and brutal words and sordid arranging of detail; perhaps, it was merely the knowledge of all the "making-believe" that she must summon to bridge the broken spans of hope and faith; but, suddenly, she began to sob. It was pitiful to see her. She released the child, and stood with her hands clenched at her sides, her bosom rising and falling with harsh breaths. The look of uplift had gone, and the reaction of mere agony had followed. Spasms of trembling shook her, and her eyes met the upturned gaze of the child without seeming to

"Where to go? . . . What to do?" she said, half aloud. "Oh,

my God, what to do?"

She passed a hand across her fore-head, and stooped. Stella felt a kiss and the touch of a burning cheek. For a moment, she was clasped so close that the beating of the woman's heart seemed to force its tumult upon hers. Then, she stood alone, behind the bank of shrubbery—alone, but frightened by contact with problems she was blind to, shaken by the anguish of a wasted life not hers.

A murmur of laughing voices reached her, from a path leading up through the pastures. She brushed the tears from her eyes, and ran toward the sound. Up the slope Rossiter and Gertrude were sauntering. The light of early love was in their faces. They held hands like children—un-

afraid and taking great joy in comradeship. You would scarcely even have thought that they had reached the point of pledging each other, they took the world with so little care.

The child lifted her hand, as if it held a danger signal. She felt ages old and sad beside these two.

"Oh, you can't come!" she cried.
"You can't look at your house today."

The two stopped, surprised and amused by her swift, tragic descent

upon them.

"Why, Stella," Gertrude said, "what are you doing here, so far from

home?"

Stella ignored the question; she thought she had a right to ignore it when she felt so old. "You mustn't go there," she repeated. "The people haven't moved away yet, and—" She hesitated, seeing that any statement of the facts that she felt free to make was likely to have small effect on heedless scatter-brains like these. Only the things which she must not tell might have had some weight. She had seen—by no possibility could she have told what she had seen, but it was a vision into the deeps of life, into its passionate retributions if not its joys; and she knew that she would rather throw her little body under their feet than allow Gertrude and Rossiter, with their smiling faces, to follow the woman to the house, or come upon her half-way, creeping forward, slowly, under the burden of her grief.

Stella drew herself up, subtly conscious of the heritage of understanding, which she was still too young to hold in full. But impressive words were lacking.

"The people haven't gone away yet," she declared again, "and—and I think their atmosphere is there,

too."

Rossiter drew in a deep breath. "Well, on my word!" he said. He and Gertrude were happy, thoughtless people, who had never consciously set out to explore new countries, or to

study the earmarks of badness. He looked at her, and then he and Gertrude broke into peals of laughter.

There were tears near to Stella's eyes, but she held her ground, as her responsibilities demanded. When the pair had quieted a little, she told them

where they might go.

"There are a great many nice places down in the pasture," she explained. "There's a rock that makes a shadow, and a log across the brook, like-like a way into another country—" She broke off, and a hot flush spread over her face.

"Will you take us, and show us the safe places?" Rossiter asked, gravely.

Stella was tempted, but the two were smiling, so she shook her head. Rossiter lifted Gertrude lightly from her feet, and swung her, face about, toward the pleasant, safe places to which the child directed them.

"Good-bye," he called, over his shoulder. "Better go home soon."

"Good-bye," the child called, in answer, and watched them half-enviously, for they were racing toward the brook, with laughter.

When they had reached it, she followed, slowly, for, beyond the brook, the home hill loomed, commanding her. It was, indeed, time to be climbing it, and her feet, never too swift in that ascent, had less than usual to make them winged. Yet, as she loitered, pondering, through the pastures and up the slope on the other side, the spirit that was forever sending her forth on these errands looked out through her eyes. She was a traveler returning from new countries, and, by the very ache of her heart, by the weariness and dust that had settled on her, she was reminded that she had wandered far.

BEYOND THE WALLS

BUILT myself an Eden, girded round By walls through which no pain could find a way— Walls of thy love, within which reigned life's May. And there we wandered, you and I, and found The world complete, the hours with roses crowned. Ah, God! an angel led me to the gate, And, while I tried to stay the sword of Fate, The walls crashed in, and struck me to the ground.

The dust and mist of tears cleared slowly; then I saw the wide, wide suffering world that lies Beyond the narrow bounds of Paradise-The world of toiling, struggling, stumbling men. I crave no Eden now, girt by a wall, Unless it be a garden built for all.

VENITA SEIBERT.

JUST TO PLEASE HIM

BELLE-Did Jack steal a kiss? MAUD-I made the dear fellow think he stole it.

THE HOUSE OF THE HEART

I HAVE made empty all my heart for you!

I have shut out the mad noise of the world,

Closed every window, made the doors fast, too,

And from each chamber to the winds have hurled

Old thoughts, old base desires, old sins, old stains;

Yea, swept my heart as all the earth is swept by April rains.

Down the long corridors there is no sound!

I wait but for your entrance through the door,
Your footfall in my heart's great vacant ground,
Your voice to sing and sing forevermore—
Your voice alone to make the old house thrill
With the vast knowledge that your love wakes all that was so still!

There shall be gladness when you come to me!
Your thoughts, not mine, shall enter in this place.
O Love! behold how white each room shall be,
And you shall make all whiter of your grace!
Come to this quiet house, this heart of mine—
It is no longer part of me, but all is thine, is thine!

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE.



HOW

"He's six feet tall and has a forty-eight-inch chest measurement—that's how!"

36

HURRAH FOR PA!

LITTLE WILLIE (proudly)—My pa knows a few things!

LITTLE BOB (contemptuously)—Ho! My pa knows fewer things than your pa.



FVERY married man is a hero to some bachelor.

ROSE LEAVES AND ASPARAGUS TIPS

OR, ROMANCE AND REALITY

A Symbolic Poem, Treating of a Present-Day Problem

By Fletcher Cowan

HE

TAKE the roses from thy hair,
Lady Alma Blanchard White!
Tear those tickets up. Forswear
Thou the opera to-night.
Simplify thy garb of state,
Doff that ermine shoulder-fleece;
Throw those diamonds in the grate,
Underneath the mantelpiece!

They have risen from the dining-table. He is angry all the way through.

Think'st because that thou art fair
Man must rest a goodly thing,
While thou slight'st his household care,
Pampered child of brooch and ring?

She casts the diamonds into the fire. They burn. She subsides into a chair. He continues:

Look! the carbons' glow
Streams through the fire-screen's mesh reticulate,
Tingeing thy hair with glory richer than peroxydine.
By heaven, thou art fair!
Come forth out o' the nimbus and stand where I am,
So thou may'st view thyself from here as I do.
Thou art too fine, too orchidal a creature
For man to look to for a meal cooked properly.

He touches the dining-table, agitatedly, with his hand. The china dances in sympathy with his mood.

SHE (demurely)

Thou know'st, my lord, when we were married, that Thou took'st me for thy betterment or worse. Thou knew'st I could not cook.

Digitized by Google

HE

But thou did'st covenant to learn!

'Twas in the morning of our courtship days—
Before I took thee from the dove-cote of thy mother's house—
I broached the subject, pertinent quite as love;
And thou didst listen, Alma, with such sweet intent
That, eftsoons, thou wert moved to, many times,
Make chafing-dish experiments with my digestion,
Chiefly at Sunday teas.
These efforts, crude but earnest, pleased me much;
For I divined in them a nearing day
When thou would'st rise upon the stepping-stone
Of my dead self, perhaps, to higher things.

I had no fear.

I looked with vision altruistic on it all,
And reasoned that as Science, in its course,
Demands at times its sacrificial gifts
Of pigeon, rabbit, frog, that it may gauge
The potency of toxics and convert
A bane-juice sinister into a ministrant,
So might I make a subject of myself at thy dear hands.

She looks at him, witheringly. He fails to wither, and continues:

Dost thou recall that Summer Sunday eve, When thou didst make me first a cheese souffle? 'Twas in thy mother's house, up-country. The sun had dropped behind the distant hills, And malachite, with gold and peach-blow scud, Frescoed the western sky. The bells were ringing folks to evening church, And I was seated outside on the porch, Awaiting, tremulously, thy developments. At last, thy samite-aproned self appeared And called me in.

Ah, tell me, sweet, Did martyred Charles at Whitehall step, you think, With nobler resignation to his doom?

SHE (indignantly)

You ate it and survived it!

HE

I took my travail gently, for I thought
Things could not well be worse, and might improve.
I did not know then thy designs were speculate;
That thou wert leading me by girlish fakirment
To bank my future store on thee as wife.
It never struck me that it was a trap.
I know now, Lady Alma, thou wert false!

He again rests his hand on the dining-table. The glassware becomes musically communicative and the candle-shades leap askew.

SHE

Sir, my lord; When from the chancel, smilax-crowned, I came To rule the seventh heaven of this flat. I reckoned not 'twas in the bond that I Should figure as the deity of thy cuisine. I thought my mission was to grace thy home; To keep thy lethal interest alive By deft surprises in my palliaments of person, So that my gowns would ever strike thee fresh; My gems and finery, all the this and that Of woman's up-to-date accoutrement, Should make me seem to thee each day so new That thou should'st love me, always, with the zest Of fancied falseness to my former self. And ever have I sought to make the bills Thou would'st receive, as souvenirs of these charms, So great thou'dst never feel ashamed of me. My lord, I brought thee a patrician heart— Think'st thou a soul of silver-and-cerise Can coalesce with thoughts of things to eat!

She cries, copiously.

HE

(Going toward her, solicitously, like a big, tender-hearted coward)

Alma, my love, go soft.
Thou dost mistake the letter of my cavil.
I don't expect thee, dear, to do the cooking,
But I expect thou'lt see that it is done;
And that dost argue knowledge on thy part
To know how 't should be done.

SHE

(Pointing toward an embossed leathern door, with brass foot-guard)

Think'st thou, my lord, thy wife will stoop To bandy words with the O'Shaughnessy?

HE

Art 'fraid of Bridget?

I'll speak with her!

(Crossing, with booted swagger)

SHE

My lord!
Throw not thyself upon the battlements to empty slaughter.

HE

(Flinging open the leathern door and calling to precincts beyond)

Come forth, thou kitchen mopsy! Tousled nymph, Nursed in the lap of regal scullionry: Peri of pots and pans, unfold thyself!

BRIDGET O'SHAUGHNESSY appears. Her hands are rested on her hips. She has a general air of alcoholic insouciance. She suggests, in some respects, the Declaration of Independence framed and hung on the bias.

THE O'SHAUGHNESSY

Phwat is it, sor?

She sniffs trouble, and sets her jaw. The man weakens, perceptibly. The wife retires behind the sheltering palms.

HE (apologetically)

Bridget, I merely called thee, colleen, dear,
To speak thee our enjoyment of yon chateaubriand steak.
Thy sauce béarnaise is out of sight,
Albeit still in evidence.
What was its composition, my good girl?
Was 't equine liniment such as veterinaries use,
Or straw-hued mineral paint for steamship stacks?

THE O'SHAUGHNESSY

ARIA (spirituoso)

As down by Banna's banks Oi sthrayed, Wan aivening, wan day, The little burruds, in bloithest notes, Made vowkal ivery shpray.

(Improvissimo)

But nawthin' on the willy bough,
That Oi cud hair or see,
Could aqual, sor, the song and dance
Yer afther givin' me.

(Spoken)

Now, d'ye moind, sor, me bouchal, and ye, me countess agra, if the sass barney that wint wid that shatter-brigand shtake was injyed so much by both o' ye, thin ye'll plaze let me in on the ground flure by raisin' me wages at onct. I'm toired of bein' a pauper cook!

VOICE

(THE LADY ALMA'S, from the sheltering palms)

My lord! Exclude her from the prandilica. She hath the seizure of her old distemper.

THE O'SHAUGHNESSY

Is it timper yer talkin' of? Can't Oi roise to a bizness ixciption widout losin' me timper? Oi niver felt more at payce with the wurruld in me life before.

Ballade (with jiganne Donegale)

Then, it's welt the flure, McCarthy; Biddy, dance ye to the bout; Yer the pride o' Doolan's party, And ye'll knock the fiddlers out!

She suddenly misses her equilibrium and disappears precipitously over herself, through the leathern door. Distant thud! . . . The LADY ALMA emerges from the palms toward her husband.

SHE

My lord, thou hast offended her most mortally. We'll lose her, see if we don't!

HE

Thank heaven, she is dead!

Signs of life are suddenly heard, as though Spring had come again. The renaissance is accompanied by the music of falling agate-ware.

THE LADY ALMA (listening)

She is putting on her hat. She is going to leave us!

Fading footsteps reverberate, as of a spirit taking its departure for another world, and the voice of an erstwhile misappreciated soul sighs forth its threnody as it goes:

THE O'SHAUGHNESSY

And whin grim death appears, afther few but happy years, I'll say, whin towld me hour-glass is drhawn—
Begone, ye blaggard slave! for St. Patrick's give me lave
Just to fill another crooskeen lawn.

Exit THE O'SHAUGHNESSY. . . . Pause. Then-

HE

Alma, thou poor lost chord of tumbled householdry— Thy mistress gone, come, while the moment's pat!

He seizes her.

SHE

Where lead'st, my lord?



HE (entering the kitchen)

Here, in the fane of Blot and Savarin, The whilom nest of culinary crime; I'll teach thee, doll-brain, how to cook a steak, And make thyself producer in emergency!

SHE

My lord!

HE

Get together!

She pins up the skirt of her mousseline de soie. He strides to the refrigerator and produces a double tenderloin. It is put on the fire. The holocaust is under the personal direction of LORD BLANCHARD. During the broiling, the light from the fire illuminates The LADY ALMA'S hair—incidentally, the room.

SHE

Aria

When splendor falls on kitchen walls, And silver-siders old in story, The leaping flame hails with acclaim The ambrose-food of carnivori.

Draw, chimney, draw, set the wild sputter flying-

HE (interrupting)

Pardon me.

He throws in some wood on general principles. Both are much interested. Already, one knows as much about the subject as the other. LORD BLANCHARD stands off and watches his wife's carefully-gauged study of humility, proudly. Finally, he produces his kodak, and takes a flash-light of her.

HE

Alma, my love, 'tis, by my soul, a sight For invalid eyes to see thee cooking here, And I have ta'en of thee a snap-shot, which I'll nail against my heart as token of the fact That thou art trump!

SHE

(Turning from her task, her eyes beaming with the old-time light of silly pleasure at the compliments he used to pay her)

My lord!

She dissolves upon his shoulder. He opens the window, with his disengaged hand, to give her air. When he turns his head again, he finds that she is closer to him than he is to her.

SHE

Blanchard, your mustache is perfectly lovely!

HE

(Feeling that he is being courted again)

So they tell me.

She adjusts the filaments, as a woman arranges the valance tassels of a cozy-corner divan.

SHE

It's softer than it used to be, isn't it, sweet?

HE

(Pleased, but beginning to wonder why she is so pleasant)

Not near so soft as thine obedience, my dear.

SHE (suddenly)

Look, Blanchard! look!

(Pointing a diamondless finger out through the air made penetrative by the risen window)

The moon!

They look out at the night, with admiration.

HE (losing ground, emotionally)

Aye, see how yon Cynthian goddess rides the sky, Lithe as a horseless chariot, chauffeured By Phaëthon with soundless naphtha! So calm she glides, I'd almost stake my talisman She draws her grace from sources practical And works on ball-bearings.

Look, Alma! for she teaches us, my dear, The lesson of our lives penultimate—
The blend of heavenly grace and earthly business. So would I have thee shine within my home, To thrill my heart and keep my soul attuned; Yet, at the same time, lift the tides of fate, By knowing how, thyself, to cook my steak!

SHE (cuddlingly)

Then I'd be greater to thee than you moon?

HE (losing ground, entirely)

My love! My light! My moon!

SHE (burying herself in the foliage of his mustache)

Ah! Tell me more!

HE (passionately)

My Welsbach!

They suddenly sniff smoke, and, turning toward the steak, they find it burned to a crisp. The LADY ALMA bursts into tears, which are very much like the real thing. Hungry, but a gentleman, LORD BLANCHARD sententiously takes the steak and shies it out of the window, into the beautiful moonlight. It flutters gently down into the Val d'Arno of the back court, upon the head of a star-gazing contemplative, seated in the parterre, while LORD BLANCHARD leads THE LADY ALMA softly into the dining-room.

HR

My wounded honor is most satisfied. Thou had'st the disposition and, from what I've seen, No sanely thinking man could look for more. We go now to the opera.

SHE

My diamonds?

HE

(Seeing the point she has been leading up to and seeing everything one better)

To-night, without them; but to-morrow night Thou'lt wear a sunburst that will put to shame The hot reflectors Archimedes trained Upon the ships of Rome!

SHE (taking his word for it)

My lord---

I'm humbled.

They go to the opera, arriving at the fashionable hour for interfering with the comfort of other people.



NEW IDEA

PLAYWRIGHT—My fortune is as good as made. I have the play of the century!

FRIEND—What will it be?

"A howling melodrama. I'm going to dramatize my automobile."

0

THE men who become suddenly rich remind us of a whale. They no sooner get to the top than they begin blowing.

THE WHIMPERYS TRADITION

By G. B. Burgin

ADY WHIMPERYS sat in the yellow drawing-room at Whimperys. Yellow suited her exquisite beauty, made a becoming background to her creamy complexion, her dark eyes, smoldering with smothered fire, her magnificent black hair and imperial shoulders—shoulders, the curves of which infallibly conveyed to admirers, whose name was legion, the superiority of the real to the ideal. If the shoulders failed to impress this fact upon any one, Lady Whimperys kindly assisted the shoulders. She had married old Sir Gerald Whimperys, of Whimperys, and he had paid the customary price for a young wife. would have preferred him for a father; but Sir Gerald explained that it would be so much simpler to marry her—it did away with unnecessary complications. He could not pretend to offer love; 'twas an idle superstition of a bygone age; but she was a monstrous fine woman, and his affection was wholly hers. Besides, if he might be permitted to mention so vulgar a theme in her hearing, he was rich, Whimperys made a pleasant residence for a couple of months in the year, there would be the customary presentation at Court, gewgaws-family heirlooms-and all that kind of thing, as opposed to the usual dreams of maiden nineteenlove in a cot with water and a crust, and a subaltern up to his eyes in debt. Those poet-fellows sometimes hit upon a truth. After a time love in a cot generally resulted in-what was the line? Oh, yes:

Love in a cot, with water and a crust, Is, Love forgive us, cinders, ashes, dust.

If he might so far presume as to advise her, there was the hereditary prestige of the Whimperys family, and—but perhaps she would take a week to think the matter over. At a word, he would fly to her feet. Then he rose, somewhat stiffly, bowed the far-famed Sir Peter Teazle-ish-cum-Whimperys bow over her slim, white fingers, and effaced himself with his wonted nonchalance.

Three weeks later, there was a Lady Whimperys; six months after the marriage, Sir Gerald experienced a new sensation: he became insanely jealous of his beautiful wife. Once or twice, he was betrayed into outbursts unbecoming the nonchalance of a Whimperys.

"You do not love me, madame," he permitted himself to remark, on surprising young Champneys at her feet.

"I cannot forget the respect due to age," she retorted; and stiffened him into a sardonic, suffering guardian of her follies.

"I shall have pleasure in sending my seconds to you, Mr. Champneys," he observed, after Lady Whimperys had swept from the room, with an offended rustle of silken skirts.

"What for?" asked that amorous young gentleman. "Men don't fight

nowadays for a woman."

"Oh!" There was the slightest suspicion of a sneer about the exclamation. "In the old days, we managed it thus;" and Sir Gerald drew his glove lightly across the young fellow's face, winged him very neatly on Boulogne Sands the following Monday, and earned the respect of men who had fancied him an old fogy.

But Lady Whimperys broke his heart, for all that—broke it by reason of the fact of her beautiful youth as opposed to his frosty old age. Though fond of admiration, she was jealous of his honor; yet he bored her. She made him suffer. If he had taken her to his heart instead of kissing her finger-tips, she would have melted. But no; he lived up to the Whimperys tradition, and was about to die for it.

Lady Whimperys, clad in anticipatory black, sat within the yellow drawing-room at Whimperys, awaiting the final summons to Sir Gerald's bedside. It seemed to her the regulation thing to do. Once, in the sweet May mornings of two centuries ago-ordinary people counted the time as years she had loved; had offered to share the fate of her penniless subaltern, and he, with a wisdom beyond his years, had declined to spoil his — career. should have been your career," she declared, proudly, and left him—forever. Sir Gerald, somewhat inadequately, filled up the hole in her heart.

Some one knocked at the door, and she was aware of the family butler impassively remarking that Sir Gerald wished to have the honor of bidding farewell to her ladyship, at her lady-

ship's convenience.

"I will come at once," she said, and lingered in frowning revery. Now that he was going from her, she almost loved him. Would he kiss her fingertips before setting forth upon his journey of all days? Should she confess that she had visited her own sufferings on him? No; she dreaded the Whimperys manner. Intuitively, she felt that he would preserve it to the last.

As she went slowly up the grand staircase, an armored Whimperys frowned at her. At the top, Sir Gerald's portrait regarded her with cynical amusement. In the central corridor, he bowed to her from the canvas. How well she remembered that bow! Then some one opened the bedroom door, and she was left alone with him.

She uttered a little exclamation of surprise. Sir Gerald, fully dressed, sat in an arm-chair. He rose and greeted her with the Whimperys bow, as he led her to a seat. She would have thought it a farce, had it not been for the beaded

drops upon his fine forehead, the icy

touch of his fingers.

"Be seated, I pray you," he said, in a voice which he strove to render natural. "I fear that this is the last time I shall have the honor of receiving you. In half an hour"—he gazed at the swinging Cupid nursing Time, scythe and all, on his knee—"in half an hour I go upon a journey."

Lady Whimperys bit her lips, and sat

down.

There were some legal-looking papers on the table. Her eyes fell upon them, then indifferently turned away. Now that she had everything money could give her, she fancied money was useless, a lure of the devil to drag down a woman's soul.

Sir Gerald poured her out a glass of wine. "Permit me," he said, courte-ously; and, as her lips touched the glass, drank to her health. "I cannot imagine a world without Burgundy." He wiped his lips with a laced handker-chief, and leaned heavily against the table.

She bowed in silence. Was the man about to torture her, in return for her indifference? She pictured him haunting her in dusky corridors, coming with noiseless step to surprise her prayers; for she could still pray—sometimes with more fervor than at others, when the exercise became purely mechanical. She never prayed for the army or its junior officers. The chilly atmosphere enveloping the gallant figure opposite froze her heart. She wondered whether it beat at all.

Sir Gerald was speaking:

"Since you have done me the honor to become a Whimperys, madame, you will permit me to remark that, doubtless owing to the absorbing nature of your other pursuits, you have scarcely assimilated the Whimperys tradition."

"I—I seem to have married a tradition," she said, almost inaudibly.

"Precisely. But the world of pleasure has drawn you away from it. It has claimed you, early and late. Now that I am unable to guide your footsteps, it has seemed to me only becoming that I should appoint a successor."

"Spare me this; I---"

"One moment, and I am done. You have already reaped a somewhat bitter experience of the army. What say you to the church, madame? You need a ghostly adviser. I——"

"Have you sent for me to torture me?" She breathed heavily, like a trapped creature. "If I have mis-

under---"

"The Reverend Cyril Gaunt," softly announced Sir Gerald's ancient servitor. He, too, had studied the Whim-

perys manner.

"Ah, Gaunt"—Sir Gerald turned to him with a smile—"your visit is delightfully timed. I leave Lady Whimperys to your care—your care, man. You—you hear me?"

He staggered toward Gaunt, as Lady Whimperys tried to spring to him. Then he swayed heavily, and fell face forward on the floor. She drew his head to her breast, wiped the foam from his lips, held him to her. "Come back!" she moaned. "Come back!"

He raised himself with difficulty on one elbow. "I grieve, madame, to refuse even so impossible a request. The church will care for——"

She held a dead man in her arms.

Gaunt gazed down upon her. Lady Whimperys looked like a hunted bird.

II

ONLY Lady Whimperys and the lawyers knew that, unless she married within a year after Sir Gerald's death. Whimperys passed away from her forever, traditions and all. As a matter of history, Gaunt had never shown that he admired her. He was a beautiful idealist, with the head of a saint and the seat of a fox-hunter. He was generally too busy in succoring the needy to have time to waste on fashionable frivolities. In addition, it was rumored that he was the only man who had ever succeeded in getting behind the Whimperys tradition with Sir Gerald. As the months went by, he found himself thrown in constant contact with Lady Whimperys, who seemed more than ever afraid of the tradition, although he did his best to explain there was no need to fear it. In doing so, he became afraid of her, worshiped her, looked upon her as a saint, quite oblivious of any chance that she, in return, might reasonably expect him to regard her as a woman.

Of course, the subaltern of bygone days—he was a captain now—appeared on the scene, when he heard that Lady Whimperys was a wealthy widow. Curiously enough, Gaunt was his cousin, and he made this forgotten cousinship a plea for spending all his time at the rectory.

Handsome, heartless, a man of the world, Cranstoun more than ever congratulated himself that he had thrown over Lady Whimperys, when she was only Muriel Helmore. He flattered himself that he had never yet seen the woman whom he could not lure to his call. But the Whimperys tradition served her ladyship in good stead; it gave her a manner of ice—a manner which Cranstoun could not overcome. "Pique," he said to himself; "and, with that rent-roll, I must take a little trouble to secure her. She's handsomer than ever. If I had married her then, we should both have starved. She told me she would rather starve with me—strange beings, women! than revel in luxury with any one else; and then, because I threw her over, a couple of years afterward she married a rich old man. It shows I must have hit her hard. I'll try her again in a week."

"Why," asked Lady Whimperys, one Summer evening, as Gaunt dined with her tête-à-tête, "do you bring your cousin to Whimperys? Is there any special reason?"

Gaunt hesitated, for his soul was lily-white, and Cranstoun had drawn a moving picture of his woes.

"Why?" repeated her ladyship.
"Am I so—so monotonous?"

Gaunt longed to tell her all that he felt; but he had promised Cranstoun his help. "Cranstoun loves you," he said, with diffidence. There was a

melodious music about the words as he breathed them.

She smiled. "Have you never heard of any youthful engagement of his?"

"He told me there was an entanglement that he had to break through."

"Why?"

"Oh, the girl was poor, romantic, fancied he could leave the army to marry her, and win bread for her by the sweat of his brow."

"And---?"

Gaunt's eyes flashed. "He feared to do it—feared!" His voice rang out like a clarion. "He feared to work, to win bread for the woman he loved—the woman who loved him."

"Yes," said her ladyship, thoughtfully; "I always fancied he was that kind of man. Do you think he cares for me? He seems to have taken you into his confidence."

"He is genuinely wretched—dreads

your coldness."

"I should think, from what I have heard of him, that he dreads work more. Why do you trouble about him?"

"He asked me to intercede for him."
"Why should you intercede for him?"

"Because I—" The words stuck in his throat.

For the first time, her beautiful, dark eyes shone upon him, and the cold mask she habitually wore dropped from her features. "Would you work for my sake?"

"But we were talking of Cranstoun."

He grew bewildered.

"Oh, your cousin will keep. He—" she broke into a merry laugh, the laugh of a happy woman—"he is always so well-preserved. Now, Mr. Gaunt, answer my question. Would you work for me? But I forgot. You have a big income—your living is a sinecure. Curates work for you."

"I would die for you, if need be;

but I would rather live for you."

"Ah, you evade my question. If we two were poor—absolutely poor—would you go into the street and earn bread for me with your own strong hands? I"—she paled—"I once

asked a man that question, and hehe hadn't the courage. He was a coward."

Gaunt knelt at her feet. "It is so easy to talk. Bid me do it, and I renounce my living to-morrow."

"Very well, I bid you. Come to me to-morrow, and tell me that it is done. You—you need not bring Captain Cranstoun with you."

He came to her on the morrow, after seeing Cranstoun, who sneered at him. "The wench is trying you—fancies you really care for her. Strip yourself for the caprice of a woman! Take care, Gaunt! You've played me false; she'll serve you in the way you have served me."

Gaunt walked to the door, and flung it open. "You know that I did the best I could for you, sacrificed my own heart. I loved her all the time, but I gave you your chance."

"Gave me my chance, with a heartless doll like that!" sneered Cranstoun; "an idiot of a woman who is eaten up with her own——"

Gaunt crashed him through the doorway, and rang the bell. "Throw Captain Cranstoun's things after him," he said to his own man, who answered the summons. "See that he leaves the place in five minutes." Then he started to walk up to Whimperys.

"The rectory has gone," said Gaunt, cheerfully, when he was shown up into her ladyship's little morning-room. "Now I'm off to London, to earn bread for you. By the way, I quarreled with Cranstoun just now." He told her what had happened.

"I think you really love me," she said, doubtfully. "You are sure you did not do this, counting on any reward?"

His fine face flushed. "I have no hope of winning you," he said, simply.

"What could you see in me?"

"Sir Gerald saw everything in you." She smiled. "Do you know that he stipulated in his will I am to marry within a year of his death, or forfeit Whimperys? Will you not help me to retain it?"

Gaunt paled. "Ah! I had never

dared to hope that you would love me. I will marry you before the year is out, and leave you—to Whimperys."

"You do not reproach me for my

whim in beggaring you?"

"Reproach? No; I love you."

"But you are penniless!"

"What matter? I am rich in pleasing you for a moment."

"Even though I do not love you?"
"Even though you do not love me."

"And you can forgive?"

"There can never be any question

of forgiveness between us.'

"Very well, then. If you will come down to Whimperys early on the thirty-first—be particular about the date—the lawyers will arrange everything, and we can be married in the private chapel."

He bent over her hand. Decidedly, she had absorbed the Whimperys manner; but she did not seem altogether satisfied. "You leave me after

the ceremony?"

"I leave you after the ceremony."

"Why?"

His eyes shone. "Because I love you."

"Ah, this—love—love! Does any man ever really love? Au revoir, until the thirty-first."

"Au revoir, until the thirty-first."

Though she smiled at him from the window as he went down the drive, he did not look back. A portrait of Sir Gerald in Hussar uniform rebuked her levity. She bowed to it, and walked merrily away to prepare for the thirty-first.

It was an absurdly quiet wedding. The Rev. Cyril Gaunt traveled thirdclass from London and walked up to Whimperys. One of the lawyers acted as his "best man." The bride wore a simple "going-away" gown, and the few servants invited to witness the wedding were scandalized at its simplicity.

When the ceremony was over, the bride stepped toward her husband, with beseeching lips. He hesitated for a moment, kissed her passionately,

and moved toward the door.

She stayed him with a peremptory gesture, her eyes dancing with delight. "Will you be good enough to offer me your arm, Cyril? I—I believe it is customary on such occasions."

"But—but I return alone," he stam-

mered.

"I think not," she said, her fine eyes glowing into his.

"I—I leave you to—Whimperys."

"I think not," she said again.
"If I remember, I told you the will stipulated that, unless I married within a year after Sir Gerald's death, Whimperys went elsewhere."

"But you have done so."

"I think not," she said, for the third time. "The year expired yesterday; that was why I fixed to-day for our wedding. You see? I could not wait any longer. Now, will you give me your arm? You are going to give me bread also, are you not? I am tired of shadows, and—and the Whimperys tradition."

They walked back to the station, and left the Whimperys tradition behind them as they traveled third-class to town. Looking into each other's eyes, they were content.

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THE LAMENT OF RESPECTABILITY

IF there's one unsecluded spot,
That I should like to own
And fence about, 'tis that small plot
Where my wild oats were sown.

ACQUITTED

JUST for the fun of experiment,
Just to hear what she would say,
Once in a moment of merriment,
In a blue morning of May,
From the red lips of a beautiful
Rosebud of girlhood I stole
One little kiss, like a dutiful,
Worshipful soul.

Robbery clear, on the face of it,
There I stood, caught like a thief.
Blush? Yes, I saw a faint trace of it,
Pink and provokingly brief.
But I was sure that she pitied me;
Silent, she waited a while,
Then turned around and acquitted me,
Quick with a smile.

How could I show her my gratitude?
What could I say for my sin?
Only repeat an old platitude,
Trite and transparent and thin.
Cupid I linked with cupidity;
Told her I loved her; and then,
With a fond lover's avidity,
Kissed her again!

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.



HINTS FOR AN INSOMANIAC

If you can't get to sleep, count three billions, taking care to pronounce each number slowly and distinctly. If this does not prove effective, get out of bed and turn eighteen handsprings. Observe a proper regard for the uniformity of the thing, and see that they are of the same size and velocity. If you still find you are unable to get into the Land of Nod, take a walk around the block, and then, if this means fails, go and find a big man and tell him he lies. He'll put you to sleep.

W. A. E. MOYER.



I N the days of the Old Testament, it was considered a miracle for an ass to speak; now, nothing short of a miracle will keep one quiet.

THE BUILDER OF THE LIGHTHOUSE

By Molly Elliot Seawell

THE Sieur de Montigny had chosen well the eyrie on which to perch his great seigneurial mansion in New France—a mansion faithfully copied from that in Old France where so many generations of Montignys had lived and died. The He had seignior was a mountaineer. been born and bred in the thin, pure, crystalline air of the Vosges; and, when he found air of the same quality among the solemn mosses of the Laurentian mountains, with the mighty St. Lawrence curving into a great horseshoe of a bay, seven miles in circumference, and lying at the foot of the fir-clad heights, the seignior stuck his sword into the ground, and cried:

"Here shall be my habitation as long as I remain in this world, and here shall dwell my children's children unto the latest generations!"

The house he built was not called a château, but, more properly, the Manoir de Montigny, being copied after those ancient mansions of a former age, which were neither castles nor châteaux, but something of each. It was a fitting abode for a man who had a grant of land in New France as big as a whole province in Old France.

The Manoir de Montigny was partly of stone and partly of wood. It had a great, high tower, from which the eye could sweep up and down and across the St. Lawrence—twenty miles wide at that point. It had loopholes for musketry, and was susceptible of defense from any attacking force unprovided with artillery. Within, it was spacious, with huge fireplaces wherein the fir and cedar

logs from the primeval forests burned through the long Winters, and in the evenings of the brief, enchanted northern Summers. The mirrors and furnishings and plate and porcelain were such as a man of splendid tastes would have, for such were the tastes the Sieur de Montigny had brought with him into the wilderness. Every Spring his vessels, loaded with furs and other merchandise with which New France abounded, sailed across the Atlantic, and every Autumn, when they returned, they brought luxuries for the Manoir de Montigny, books and pictures especially for the seignior, watches and guns and fine clothes for Fernand, the only son of the house, and laces, brocades and baubles for madame and Mademoiselle Isabelle, the only daughter of house. Fortune had adopted the Sieur de Montigny as her own child, and he continued to enjoy her favors by deserving them, for he was of the stuff of which the makers of a new country are fashioned -being far-seeing, bold, literate, full of resource, making money rapidly, spending it generously and wiselv.

He had chosen a wife fit for him—a gentlewoman, with both sense and beauty—and their children were what might have been expected of such parents. Fernand, after completing his education in France, was making the campaign of 1730 with Marshal Saxe—the seignior, who had been a soldier in his youth, rightly thinking that roughing it for a while would be a good education for the young man. The seignior was willing—nay, anx-

ious—that Fernand should marry, and was nobly indifferent to the his daughter-in-law bring. He asked only that she should be of gentle condition and worthy to be loved. But Isabelle, the darling of her father's heart and the treasure of his eyes—Isabelle, the seignior wrathfully declared to be too young to marry, at the very age-eighteenthat her mother had been when Isabelle was born. The seignior did not really intend that this precious jewel should remain without a setting, but his stout heart trembled at the thought of losing her. Isabelle herself, some years past the age when girls of her wealth and condition usually married, had come to adopt the same view in her own mind as her father. Some day she would marry, but it should be to some one so great, so charming, so loving!—in short. Isabelle had a dream of love. wardly, she was the most demure. well-brought-up of girls, not lacking in beauty, but more charming than Occasionally, however. she would show a fire, a resolution, a disposition to think for herself, that would seriously disturb madame, her mother, nearly frighten to death old Mademoiselle Cornélie, her governess and dame de compagnie, and throw her father into fits of laughter, who saw his own high spirit reproduced in this charming, slim, dark-eyed, milk-skinned girl. Isabelle, like her father, loved books, and when madame remonstrated, and Mademoiselle Cornélie raved and protested at some of the books the seignior gave Isabelle to read, he only grew testy, and said:

"I know what my daughter shall read. If she did not love to read, she

would not be my child."

In the Summer, the manoir would be full of guests. In the Winter, the seignior would take his wife and daughter to Quebec, where he had a house, and there would be a month of balls and pastimes, in which Isabelle shone. After each of these visits to Quebec—since Isabelle was fifteen, and she was now eighteen—there had been offers for her hand; the commandant of the garrison had been kept busy presenting offers to the Sieur de Montigny from young officers who wished to marry his daughter; but the seignior would not, so far, listen to any. Madame, however, had quietly determined that another year should see Isabelle married—and sometimes madame had her way.

September was always a time of excitement at the Manoir de Montigny, for then it was that the seignior's vessels returned from France, with news, letters, books, music, clothes, furniture—all that was needed for the whole year by the family and retainers of de Montigny. And on a joyous September morning, in 1730, the seignior spied from his towerroom the white sails of La Belle Isabelle, the first of his returning ships, and, shouting the news at the door of madame's saloon, where sat madame and Isabelle and their dames de compagnie, the seignior strode down the winding road toward the vast blue river.

The little dock was already crowded with people, chiefly women and children from the village which nestled under the wing of the manoir. Their husbands and brothers and sons were on the *Isabelle*, and the vessel, beating up the river against a head-wind, flew the signal that all were well on board, and none had died or been left behind.

Meanwhile, the manoir was quickly emptied. Madame, a little too stout for walking, was being carried down to the dock in her sedan-chair. one side of her trotted the fat little chaplain, Père Bouneval, on the other her dame de compagnie, while behind her walked Isabelle and Mademoiselle Cornélie, and behind them all the attendants and hangers-on of a great house. By the time the vessel had cast her anchor, a boat put off from her, containing the captain and a stranger wrapped in a cloak. At the sight of the stranger, the seignior smote his hands for joy.

"Yonder is the man sent me by my agent to build the lighthouse!" he cried; and the village women greeted this with shrill cries of delight. the building of the lighthouse had been promised them many a year—a lighthouse on that rocky shoal, which often kept vessels for a long time down the river, as they feared to pass it except in daylight and clear weather. The seignior had sent to France for an engineer to do this work, and had also stipulated that the lighthouse-builder should be a lettered man, capable of acting as secretary and amanuensis; also, that he should not be young and handsome. seignior had seen trouble come of young and handsome secretaries, domiciled in families; he had known one case, where the brother of a beautiful young girl had been compelled to take a secretary out into a lonely place by night, and despatch him with more than twenty stab wounds. The seignior's keen eyes, though, in the brilliant light of a September morning, soon saw that his future secretary was every day of thirty-five, and might be forty; that his dark hair was sprinkled with gray, and crows' feet were around his eyes; and that he was both lean and sallow. But he forgot that what men regard as blemishes in a man, some women regard as attractionsfor example, a sword-cut across the face, if won in defense of a woman, or the absence of an arm, if lost in battle.

The captain, however, had now scrambled up the dock, and the secretary followed him much more gracefully. Madame already held in her hands, which trembled much, a thick packet from Fernand, and the seignior had another one of the same kind, when Père Bouneval called upon all to give thanks to God for the *Isabelle's* safe return, which they did, the seignior and madame kneeling in the midst; and then the captain presented the stranger.

"This, seignior, is Monsieur Edmond Lenoir, sent to your agent by Monsieur Fernand, and by your agent sent to you, as secretary and civil engineer."

Now, one would think that Monsieur Lenoir, coming out in such a capacity, would act as if honor were done him by so great a territorial lord as the Sieur de Montigny. But, instead, although Lenoir bowed, with the greatest respect, to the seignior and the ladies, there was that unmistakable look of the eye and poise of the head and planting of the feet which says, in spite of honeyed words, "I and thou are the same." And there is something in this attitude of the mind which compels the world to accept this equality. So, although no fault could be found with Monsieur Lenoir, it was clear that he saw no difference between a great seignioral lord and a landless fellow like himself.

The seignior, however, being a man of liberal mind, rather liked this independent air in his new secretary, and reflected that the company of such a man might be highly agreeable to him. And, besides, Monsieur Lenoir was known to Fernand, and had been a military as well as a civil engineer. Even then madame, with her eyes devouring Fernand's letter, was asking Monsieur Lenoir a thousand questions about her son, all of which he answered with gentleness and intelligence. Then it suddenly occurred to the seignior that, in spite of Lenoir's crows' feet and lantern jaws, he was well built and had an agreeable voice, and might be too attractive for a secretary; but, after all, he was past his first youth, and looked the soberest creature in the At that very moment, Isaworld. belle was furtively examining Lenoir and privately resolving that he was a very personable man, and her innocent and eloquent eyes were telling this to Lenoir, who was a reader of women's eves. But it only made him turn his own glance away from her.

That day was a day of delightful turmoil at the Manoir de Montigny, and so were many days thereafter. But there was work from the start for the new secretary. The Isabelle's cargo had to be verified and re-stowed for Quebec; there were other vessels expected, letters to be replied to, all

the business of a busy season attended to. For several days, the seignior and Lenoir worked together in the tower-In the evenings, the seignior, tired but well content with his work. went to madame's saloon, where the ladies and the fat little chaplain sat, and Isabelle played to her father on the harpsichord the new music sent her from Paris by Fernand's order. The seignior was rather annoyed by Lenoir's choosing to spend the evenings in his room rather than in the large hall, where all the retainers and poor relatives gathered around the huge fireplace. looked as if he held himself above every one in the house—many of them relations of the seignior and madame and actually thought himself upon a footing with the master of the mansion. At table, the first day, he had. been put close to madame, that he might talk to her about Fernand, and afterward he took the place quite naturally and unconsciously, and nobody, not even the seignior, had the courage to ask him to move lower down. no one could say Lenoir was presuming; he was too quiet, too silent, too reserved for that. As for his manners at table, one might have supposed that he dined with the King every day, he was so graceful and so easy. Isabelle, who never exchanged a word with him, beyond, "Good day, mademoiselle," "Good day, monsieur," yet found out, by keen listening and native wit, much about Lenoir. She discovered that he knew music, and suspected he could play the viola da gamba well.

One night—it was November, and the weather was bitterly cold-madame saw, through the open door of the saloon, Lenoir come down into the great hall from his room, whither he had been since supper, and warm himself at the fire. Isabelle, who played the harpsichord skilfully, was playing at that moment, and Lenoir could not but listen to the music. When it stopped, he turned to go back to his chilly room up-stairs. Some pitying impulse made madame call out:

"Monsieur Lenoir, will you not come

into my saloon?"

Lenoir responded as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world for him to be entertained in the saloon of a great lady, and, after politely bowing to mademoiselle and the dames de compagnie, seated himself near the seignior. Now, the Sieur de Montigny adored music, and it suddenly occurred to him that his accomplished secretary might also be a musician; so he cried out:

"Monsieur Lenoir, I'll wager that you play some instrument—and play it well."

Lenoir smiled and made no reply. "'Tis no use to play the old fox," cried the seignior, good-naturedly; "now, deny it if you can!"

"I can play yonder viola da gamba," replied Lenoir, indicating one standing in the corner beside Isabelle's harpsichord.

For answer, the seignior rose, and, seizing the viol, placed it in Lenoir's

"With madame's permission," said Lenoir, bowing toward madame. The beating of Isabelle's heart, when Lenoir began to draw the bow over the strings, was almost loud enough to hear. But, with the strange selfcommand of women, as soon as she felt herself powerfully moved, she suppressed every sign of it. Never had she heard one play so well as Lenoir—his playing was so full of masculinity, as her playing on the harpsichord was so delicately and appealingly feminine. And, when the rich chords and penetrating melodies of Rameau, Corelli and Tulli palpitated through the room, the sconces and mirrors on the walls, the polished and resonant floor, all seemed to ring and ring again with the music. And Lenoir was likewise the most graceful of The viol was an admirable players. instrument for a man of a certain size and lightness of build—and Lenoir was the figure for it. The sweep of his arm as he drew the bow with power and skill, was only equaled by the airy grace of his pizzicato playing. And the expression of his dark eyes, somber, yet glowing,

seemed to add a deeper meaning to the music. Isabelle, sitting quite still, with her hands clasped in her lap and her eyes fixed on the floor, was moved in every nerve of her body with a new ecstasy, a prime delight.

When Lenoir finished his first piece, there was a chorus of praise from all except Isabelle. The seignior was loud in his commendation, and madame scarcely less so. As for the dames de compagnie and the little chaplain, who ever heard of such who were not pleased at their betters? Only Isabelle was perfectly silent; but a look flashed in Lenoir's eyes, speaking a language which musicians and lovers understand.

Presently Lenoir took up his bow again, and played a strain of the Cardinal de Rohan's song, beginning:

Ton souvenir est toujours là,

Then he said, in that quiet way of his, which would have been the most presumptuous thing in the world if it had not been the most modest:

"The harpsichord accompaniment of that song is very beautiful. Perhaps mademoiselle would honor me by playing it with me."

Isabelle looked toward madame, who inclined her head; no one in the manoir had, so far, balked Lenoir in

anything.

"The honor will be mine, monsieur, to play with so fine a musician," said Isabelle, and, stepping to the harpsichord, she struck the note for attuning. And then she and Lenoir played together the sweet air—played it with so much skill and tenderness and feeling that it was enchanting to themselves and to all who heard it.

Isabelle kept her gaze fixed on the music-book before her, and her touch upon the keys was a little tremulous. Lenoir played from memory, and his keen glance saw the graceful curve of Isabelle's throat above her bodice of red silk, the whiteness of her arms as the lace fell away from her dimpled elbows, the silky blackness of her hair, unprofaned by powder. And

he saw more—the soul and mind and heart shining within her fair body.

He was a strong man and had known great vicissitudes, but this sweet, girlish presence, this blending of souls, which music always means, thrilled him as he had never been thrilled. And they were in the wilderness! As in a beautiful, prophetic dream, Lenoir saw revealed to him, in an instant, a long procession of these enchanted evenings; and, when he asked Isabelle if she played some of Glück's music, then just beginning to be known, she said:

"No, but I will learn it." She, too, saw the vista of delights before

her.

The routine of life at the manoir went on as usual that Winter of 1730-31, except that it was brightened by Lenoir. The seignior found him to be, like himself, of large and comprehensive mind, capable of dealing with affairs, as well as building lighthouses and playing the viola da gamba. Moreover, he was accomplished in The seignior loved works of that rascal Rabelais-likewise of Molière, who, too, was a great rogue, so the chaplain said and he also liked the sonorous lines of Pierre Corneille. Lenoir was proficient in all of these, and some others regarded with great affection by the seignior himself, but held in holy horror by the chaplain and the ladies.

The seignior soon came to the conclusion that some fault or misfortune had brought such a man as Lenoir into the wilderness; but he solaced himself with the good words about the secretary contained in Fernand's letters, of which later ones had come than Lenoir had brought. And, meanwhile, the seignior was the man to take the goods the gods provide. So, after spending his days working steadily with Lenoir, he looked forward with joy to the evenings, which now were given over to reading and music. And, insensibly, Lenoir became Isabelle's instructor in music, giving her hints and little admoni-



tions in response to her requests. Every word they exchanged was in the presence of her parents and half a dozen other persons, but there was that language of music, which no one thoroughly understood except themselves, which spoke to them with a thousand eloquent tongues. It conveyed to Lenoir, for example, a subtle reproach, when, at Christmastime, he used his holiday, manlike, to go on a hunting expedition, which lasted a whole week. And Lenoir, in the same unspoken language, subtly proved to Isabelle that he had not, during his absence, forgotten their evening hours together.

In that interval had come a visitor to the manoir—the young Count Valmeny, just from France. He was exploring the new country, at his leisure and in state, being of great fortune and condition. He had letters to the seignior, which secured him a welcome. And, casting an eye of favor upon Isabelle, he quietly informed himself of the amount of her dowry, which was large. Without that, her dark eyes would have made but little impression on Charles Val-

meny.

For Isabelle, no man living could then blot out the impress made by Lenoir, but she positively disliked Valmeny. He was reckoned handsome, and was certainly handsomer, as he was younger, than Lenoir. But Isabelle promptly informed Mademoiselle Cornélie that Valmeny's eyes were too close together; that his mouth was cruel; that she had seen him, when he had thought himself unobserved, whip a dog unmercifully for knocking his fowling-piece over. As for his great estates in France, his title and his military rank, she cared nothing—so she told mademoiselle, and told her truly.

When Lenoir came back, all of the hangers-on of the manoir were full of Count Valmeny's visit. At the mention of this name, a slight change came over Lenoir's countenance; but his heart gave a great jump and stood still. However, being a man

tried in vicissitudes, he maintained his self-command, and no one dreamed that the lighthouse-builder, secretary and viol-player, had anything to do with a great gentleman like Count

Valmeny.

It was the first evening of Lenoir's return that Isabelle's eyes mutely reproached him for his absence; and he, who had sworn never to think twice of any woman, and who saw the danger, wickedness and folly of engaging the fancy of his seignior's daughter, could not, for the life of him, forbear giving her a look that made amends for all. And then the viol and harpsichord conversed together, and told all the secrets of their hearts.

The very next day, when the seignior and Lenoir were at work, came a messenger with a letter, which caused the seignior to ask the honor of madame's presence in the tower-room. Lenoir would have left, but the

seignior detained him.

"No," he said; "I have need of your services in answering this letter."

Madame, having toiled up the many stairs, which were trying to her, entered, and was seated with much ceremony in an arm-chair. And then the seignior proceeded to read the letter to her. It was from Count Valmeny, making a formal offer for Isabelle's hand. It stated very explicitly what he could do in the way of settlements —and it was very splendid; and with equal explicitness he stated what he wished the Sieur de Montigny to do; and his expectations were not modest. But there could be no doubt about the desirability of the match. Isabelle must marry some one, and she could not, in reason, expect another such brilliant opportunity as Count Valmeny offered her.

The seignior sighed at the thought of losing his little girl; madame shed a few tears. Lenoir, mending his pens, drove his penknife deep into his finger without knowing it, until he saw the blood dropping on the table before him. The letter which was to be sent to the count was debated and settled,

and madame departed to break the agreeable news to the future countess. The seignior dictated a letter of solemn acceptance to Count Valmeny, which Lenoir wrote in his usual steady hand, and sealed with the seignior's great seal.

"Ah, Lenoir, it is hard when the birdlings leave the nest!" said the seignior; but, as surely as Summer succeeds Spring, they do. It wrings the heart of a parent to write such a letter as you have just written for me."

Lenoir might have added that such letters sometimes wring other than par-

ents' hearts.

It was on a dark January afternoon that this happened, and, when the letter was written, it was supper-time. Lenoir went out into the vast, cold corridor of the mansion, a distant cry smote his ears—a cry of anguish from Isabelle. He stood still, pierced to the soul by the sound. He heard another and another, each time louder and more full of grief. Lenoir stood rooted to the spot—it was a small, dark alcove under the stairs, by which he passed to his own room. His hearing, preternaturally sharp, caught sound of sobbing which succeeded the wild cries, and each sob was a knifethrust through him, and yet filled him with ecstasy; for it is not with loud crying and sobbing that a young girl receives the addresses of a man who is agreeable to her.

Presently, Mademoiselle Cornélie rushed past him and up the stair, and hammered on the door of the seignior's room. Lenoir could not but hear the

message.

"Madame begs that monsieur will come to mademoiselle;" and then, like the rest of her kind, delighting in a sensation, she began to pour out a tale. "As soon as madame mentioned the name of Count Valmeny, mademoiselle burst into tears and screams, declaring she would go in a convent before she would—"

"That is enough, mademoiselle," was the seignior's response, as his quick and heavy step resounded down

the stairs.

Yes, it was true. Isabelle, cowering in her bed, vowed, with a violence quite foreign to her, that she would not marry Count Valmeny, and she spoke of a convent so often, and so implored her parents to let her go to the one in Quebec, that the father and mother, exchanging anxious glances, soothed her and told her she need think no more of the count for the present.

Lenoir sat in his room, until the great bell summoned him to supper. The more he thought of those pitiful cries, the greater the exultation of his heart. He went down and ate his supper with a good appetite. Afterward, the seignior sat, gloomy and abstracted, in the great hall. There was no talk of music for that night. But, presently, the sound of the harpsichord was heard; Isabelle was playing "Ton souvenir est toujours là."

The red blood mounted to Lenoir's dark face, but he did not move. seignior, rousing himself, smiled. Isabelle was becoming reasonable; no girl who was utterly miserable could play the harpsichord so. The seignior went in the saloon, motioning for Lenoir to follow. There sat madame and the usual company. Isabelle, a little pale, but by no means broken-hearted, sat at the harpsichord. Something in her eyes, as she looked at Lenoir, made his blood leap. He took his viol and they played the sweet, familiar airs together. Then some demon, or some angel, within Lenoir, acting without his volition, made him say:

"Mademoiselle, I have remembered another air—an Italian one—I learned some years ago." And he spoke the name in Italian, of which Isabelle had some knowledge, but no one else had except the chaplain, and he was not present that night. And the Italian words spoken by Lenoir meant:

"Dear heart, wherefore thy pain?" Isabelle shot him a glance of understanding, and he played the air—a pretty, sentimental thing. And the same demon or angel forced him to

say, when he had finished:

"There is a sequel to it, 'I will be true."

Lenoir spoke quite unconcernedly, and the father and mother and the dames de compagnie understood nothing of what had passed when Isabelle replied, calmly:

"I think I can play that if you will

show me how."

Thus was their love first put into words.

That night, when the ladies had retired, the seignior called Lenoir into the tower-room, and there commissioned him to write a letter that filled him with joy. It was to the Count Valmeny, expressing a high sense of the honor done the family of Montigny, but hinting at Isabelle's obstinacy. Her behavior was softened as much as possible, and the convent idea was pooh-poohed as a thing not worth serious consideration, and the suggestion was made that the count should come to the manoir and try his hand at putting the convent idea out of Isabelle's head, where, in truth, it had never lodged.

Lenoir spent that night pacing his room, and, there being odd acoustic qualities in the house, Isabelle heard him, although her room was far off in another wing. And, as her sobs and cries had filled Lenoir's soul with ecstasy, so the quiet but steady tramp he maintained all night told Isabelle a story she wished to hear, and would have ruined Count Valmeny's chances,

if he had ever had any.

But Lenoir had problems to deal with quite unknown to Isabelle. There was his past. That made him wish to shoot himself. And how could he, with honor, say one word to Isabelle in the way of love? Yet, the winged word had been spoken; it could not be recalled. And the Count Valmeny-how well he knew that man! And was it not his duty to warn the seignior against him? But would the warning be believed? One thing was certain-neither the seignior nor madame would force their daughter into any marriage, however brilliant, if it were odious to her. And Lenoir knew that Isabelle would heed all his warnings.

Fate always provides lovers with opportunities, and one came to Lenoir within a week.

One night, when they were at their music in the saloon, the seignior and madame and her dames de compagnie and the chaplain listening, Isabelle came to a difficulty in her part—she often needed explanations from Lenoir—and he was standing over her, pointing out the notes with his bow, when a loud crash was heard. It was nothing but a fierce wind blowing to a heavy door, but it sounded like the crack of doom. Everybody's attention was distracted to it but Isabelle's, whose glance into Lenoir's eyes said, plainly, "Now is a time for you to speak."

And this is what fate made Lenoir say, in a whisper, unheard by any but

Isabelle:

"Mademoiselle, I love you and would die for you; but, knowing my unworthiness, I would not prevent you, if I could, from being happy with a worthier man than I. Count Valmeny, though, is a very unworthy man. I know him well, and he is a scoundrel."

And Isabelle, who had never spoken a secret word to a man before in her life, replied, in the same quick whisper:

"I shall never marry Count Valmeny, or any other man—but you."

So it is that all customs, habits, training, beliefs and injunctions are mere sport to the great master passion.

In a fortnight came a letter from Count Valmeny, saying he would do himself the honor to come to the manoir, which he did, and stayed four

days.

In that time, he saw Lenoir every day, and more than once heard him play the viol to Isabelle's harpsichord; but neither of the two men gave a sign of ever having seen the other before. Isabelle's behavior to the count was undeniably hostile; so much so that he told the seignior he should wish to wait six months, during which he would make a necessary voyage to France, and at the end of that time he would return and see if mademoiselle had become more amiable.

The seignior assented to this, with the greatest good humor; he had no notion of forcing Isabelle into a marriage with any one against her will. So the Count Valmeny left, and, shortly after, sailed for France. His brains were busily at work contriving against Lenoir.

II

THE Spring came, and work began on the lighthouse. It had been so well planned and prepared for that the progress made seemed magical. Lenoir spent his whole day out in the river, directing, overseeing and, sometimes, even toiling with his own hands. He became as brown as a blackamoor, and, when he came ashore in his working clothes, wet and out-atelbows, even Isabelle laughed when she saw him. Yet no man is at his worst when engaged in the business for which he is best fitted, and Lenoir was easily a master of the science which he professed.

Of course, every principle of honor and propriety required that Lenoir should not make love in any form to the only daughter of the house of Montigny. But what is a man to do, when the woman he loves makes love to him, through a medium known only to themselves, and is encouraged thereto by the persons who might be supposed the most interested in preventing it? For the seignior would as soon, and sooner, have foregone his supper as his evening concert. And so poor Lenoir was in a way forced to take part in that sweet converse, through which Isabelle could say the most captivating and intoxicating things to him; and he, being but a man, could not but reply to her in kind. Thus it went on through the soft Spring evenings into the long twilight of Summer, when the moon streamed in at the open window, and made the two candles on the harpsichord appear like fireflies, and the deep shadows made it possible for Lenoir Isabelle to exchange glances which told even more than the music.

The posts from Quebec were tolerably regular during the Summer, and the seignior received many communications; but Lenoir had not had a letter since he had been at the Manoir de Montigny. One day in June, however, he had a letter from France. In it was a printed notice, such as was common in that day, saying that if one Edmond Lenoir, a civil engineer, about thirty-five years of age, of good build, dark complexion and well versed in literature and music, would make his whereabouts known, the sum of forty thousand livres was at his disposal at a certain banker's in Paris.

The Seignior de Montigny received one of the same notices, and, calling Lenoir, who, with a pale face and his open letter in his hand, was going out of the tower-room, said:

"Here is great fortune for you, Lenoir. You are the man meant by this."

For answer, Lenoir said, coolly: "It is an enemy who has done this. I shall not claim the money, seignior. I tell you now, boldly and frankly, that it is my wish and intention to remain unknown. I will add that you may dismiss me to-day. But I should like to remain until the lighthouse is finished."

The Sieur de Montigny was an acute man, and this bold avowal made him think Lenoir had met with a misfortune, rather than a fault. So, fixing his deep-set eyes on Lenoir, the Sieur de Montigny said:

"I will keep you until the lighthouse is done. Then by what you may choose to tell me will it be whether you remain with me or not."

Lenoir bowed and went out. He did not express any thanks, which made favor for him with the seignior, who reasoned thus: "He acts as a man who has received a simple act of justice and not a considerable favor. Had he poured forth gratitude, I should have suspected him."

Lenoir went about his work as if nothing had happened. The seignior said not a word further on the subject.

On the first of September, the light-

house was finished. On that day, it had been blessed by the chaplain, and a newly married couple, Jean and Marie Tessier, who had been brought up at the manoir, were installed as light-keepers. They had two rooms in the lower part of the lighthouse, and everything in them was new and neat, though plain, as became humble persons.

The ceremony of blessing took place on the bright September morning. In the afternoon, Lenoir, meaning to see to the first lighting of the lamps himself, took a boat and rowed out to the lighthouse, and Jean and Marie, wishing to do some last errands in the village, went ashore in their own boat, to return at dark.

Lenoir, alone in the lighthouse, gave a last inspection to everything in the light-room, and then, going down into Jean and Marie's rooms, looked about the simple home of two poor peasants. And his vagrant fancy began to weave a vision of Isabelle and himself living there, instead of Jean and Marie. He was a dreamer as well as a man of action, and the thought of Isabelle and himself in a little home of their own was so beautiful, though wild and extravagant beyond words, that it possessed him wholly. Wrapt in this enchanting reverie, baseless and lovely as a dream, he stood still, with folded arms, before the window, looking toward the sunset. And then, like an echo from his own soul, he heard Isabelle's sweet voice speaking.

Through the open window, flooded with the September sunshine, he saw a boat, in which sat Isabelle and Mademoiselle Cornélie, her dame de compagnie, and they were rowed by Jacques, the deaf old boatman, who had had charge of all the boats at the manoir for many years. Lenoir at once went down the narrow stairs, and assisted the ladies to ascend. Isabelle's cheeks were a flame of fire. She had not hoped to see Lenoir—their visit was to Jean and Marie. Lenoir was so kind and courteous in showing and explaining all things to them that, as Mademoiselle Cornélie said, they could

not have been better entertained if Jean and Marie had been at home.

They had meant to stay only a half-hour, but an hour slipped by before they knew it, and they were still in the light-room at five o'clock. Suddenly, the sun seemed to go out of the heavens, and a vast white fog began to creep in from the gulf.

Lenoir was the first to see it, and, at once, he hurried Isabelle and mademoiselle down the stairs to the boat. The fog was then galloping in, but Lenoir had no doubt that Jacques could get his passengers ashore. He had just placed Mademoiselle Cornélie in the boat, and had turned to assist Isabelle, when he heard a splash of oars, and saw three yards of green water between the boat and the stairs. Jacques, as deaf as a post, and with his back to his passenger, thought Isabelle also was in the boat.

Lenoir shouted, Mademoiselle Cornélie screamed, but Jacques pulled away, until mademoiselle, catching him by the collar, forced him to turn around. They were then twenty yards from the lighthouse, and, as Jacques began to paddle furiously in turning the boat, the fog came down like a white wall between boat and lighthouse. Everything was lost in the ghostly Lenoir continued to shout, and, at first, they heard faint cries of response from Mademoiselle Cornélie: but, presently, all was still-Isabelle and Lenoir on the lighthouse stairs were alone, as if they had a great, white, cold, silent world to themselves.

"Pray make yourself easy, mademoiselle," said Lenoir, readily, while assisting Isabelle up the stairs; "there is no danger. It is not the first time, by a hundred, that Jacques has been caught in a fog. It may lift at any moment, and neither mademoiselle nor yourself will suffer more than a slight inconvenience."

Lenoir was not quite so sure as he professed about mademoiselle's safety, and Isabelle knew, as well as he, what the fog might mean at that season. Nevertheless, she was thrilled with joy, at the thought of that one

hour alone with Lenoir. She had never seen nor spoken to him alone before.

He left her for a few minutes in the sitting-room, while he went up into the light-room and lighted the lamps. His hand was steady, but his heart, like Isabelle's, was beating furiously.

When he returned to the little room below, it was already dark enough to light candles. If Lenoir had thought Isabelle would be frightened or embarrassed at finding herself alone with him, he was soon enlightened; for never was a creature more at ease. Yet she had never before, in all her life, been alone with a man for a moment until then. The subtle flattery of this was not lost on poor Lenoir. She had found candles, which Lenoir lighted with his flint and steel. And then the same demon or angel, which had made him speak those words to her about Count Valmeny, on that June evening, inspired him to say:

"It would be the supper-time of Jean and Marie—so I will do as Jean would

do, and make the kettle boil."

"And I," replied Isabelle, her quick wit catching Lenoir's hidden meaning, "will lay the cloth and cut the bread, as Marie would do."

Isabelle went into the bedroom, and, rummaging there, reappeared with a white apron and a cap, such as Marie wore; and Lenoir, seeing a new fustian jacket of Jean's hanging on a nail in the narrow passage, went out, shut the door, and came back with Jean's jacket on. And then their eyes met, bright with meaning—they were Jean and Marie for the time.

Lenoir was so filled with fear, rapture, remorse, horror and delight, that he could scarcely speak. Not so, Isabelle; hers was all unthinking joy. She laid the cloth, fluttering around the table like a happy bird, and, when Lenoir protested, "Mademoiselle—pray do not—I cannot permit you," she burst out laughing, and mimicked him, asking:

"Do you think Jean would say that to Marie? Instead, he would say, 'Hurry up, girl; I am hungry and must have my supper.'"

Lenoir's dark, expressive eyes fixed themselves on Isabelle, and she studied them gaily, her own brimming over with a daring delight which took no thought for the morrow. Lenoir's gaze was full of somber passion and longing. Isabelle, knowing little, feared less.

She cut the bread found in the cupboard, and boiled the eggs, Lenoir looking on in silent chagrin and amazement, which brought smiles to Isabelle's face; but, when it came to boiling the rasher of bacon, Lenoir asserted his knowledge as an old campaigner, and managed it with skill. And, presently, they were seated opposite each other at the little table, on which was spread a coarse, white cloth, with iron forks and spoons, and a couple of sputtering candles; and Isabelle, whose spirits seemed to rise every moment, whether inadvertently or not called Lenoir, Jean; and Lenoir, being but a man, after all, could not refuse the challenge, and called Isabelle, Marie; and so it was clearly established between them that they loved each other—and they supped together.

And the fog lay still and white upon the river, shutting them out from all the world, as if they were dwellers upon another planet. No sound came to them from the shore. Every halfhour Lenoir went up into the lighthouse, and trimmed the lamps, and shouted out of the window, and listened for a reply; but all around him was closed the impenetrable white wall.

Isabelle had found a great stocking of Jean's on which Marie had been engaged, and, sitting before the fire, the light shining upon her white apron and cap, her delicate, radiant face and melting eyes, she puzzled poor Lenoir as the needles flew between her fingers. Every time he came down the stairs, after these periodic absences, she raised her eyes to his, with a welcome in them that no man, not wholly an idiot, could misunderstand.

They did not speak much; they were too happy. They sat on either side

of the rude table, the candles flaring between them; and, if, at that moment, they had heard a cry from a boat coming after them, it would have chilled their hearts. True, Isabelle had some fears about Mademoiselle Cornélie, but she was only too ready to believe Lenoir's assurances that she was safe—an assurance of which he professed more confidence than he felt.

The night wore on. Lenoir renewed the fire and candles, and kept the lamps going in the lighthouse. Isabelle's eyes were wide and bright; she meant not to sleep, or to lose one

moment of Lenoir's company.

As midnight struck, Lenoir started. There is always something solemn at the midnight hour, and a deep silence fell between them.

"Mademoiselle," said Lenoir, after a while, "there is something I wish to tell you; it is about my past life."

"If it be that you were born to a higher station than the one you occupy in my father's house, I can believe you, for I see it with my own eyes," was Isabelle's reply.

"And, if I said that the place I hold in the Sieur de Montigny's house is a higher one than I could hope to

occupy----

His tone sobered Isabelle. She laid aside the huge stocking, and fixed her eyes, now serious enough, on his. Lenoir, looking her steadily in the

eye, spoke in a quiet voice.

"Yes, that is true, for I am a forger, mademoiselle. I forged my father's name to a bill for a thousand livres, when I was twenty years old. Before then, I was the Vicomte de Roucourt. Since then, I have been Edmond Lenoir, civil engineer—when I could get work. When I could not get work, I have starved."

Isabelle's hands, which were lying in her lap, slowly slid to her side. Her head fell over on the table. Lenoir ran to her, and, lifting her head, tried to say some words to her, but they died in his throat, and, a few scanty and burning tears, such as men shed, fell on her cheeks, grown suddenly pale. But the sight of Lenoir's agitation

calmed Isabelle. She sat up, her voice returned to her, and she said, quietly, laying her soft, white hand on his lean, brown one:

"Tell me all-all-all!"

"The money was not for myself. My father kept us—my brother Regnard and me—on a pittance, unfit for peasants, much less gentlemen's sons; and most of his fortune came from our mother, too. Regnard was a year younger than I, and a consumptive. He was beguiled into play by the Count Valmeny, and lost to him a thousand livres. The shock of it brought on Regnard a bleeding at the lungs, that the doctors said must kill him. He lived only a week afterward, and he had but one cry—his eyes said it—he spelled it with his fingers when he could no longer speak. It was to pay the thousand livres. I tried to borrow it. I was young, inexperienced and distracted with grief. No one would lend it to me. The Count Valmeny was demanding payment. I went to our father at last, and told him all. He cursed me, and refused to give me the money. I then went away, drew a bill for a thousand livres, signed my father's name to it, got the money, and paid it. I returned to my father, and told him what I had done, and that I was willing to go to the galleys for it—but it had enabled Regnard to die in peace. My father said to me, 'You shall go to the galleys for what you have done;' and he is a vindictive man and one who keeps his word. The first thing I did, after this interview with my father, was to go to the Count Valmeny, and give him a good beating. I would not fight him—I only beat him within an inch of his life. I fought my way to the king at Fontainebleau, and told him, on my knees, the whole story. He gave me his pardon, which I always carry in my breast, and prohibited any advocate in France from undertaking the cause against me. Likewise, he forbade Count Valmeny the court. I took my mother's name of Lenoir, went to the Low Countries, and studied to be an

engineer. It was there I met your brother. And I asked nothing of any man but work. I came out to this new country, thinking I could be more at peace here. I was, until Count Valmeny found me out. It was he who hypocritically urged my father to offer forty thousand livres, if I would disclose myself; but I would not." Lenoir paused. His dark skin had grown pallid with agitation, and there were drops upon his forehead.

"Perhaps Count Valmeny saw that I—that you—" Isabelle stopped, her

face burning with blushes.

There was a pause, eloquent with meaning.

"But do not think me capable of accepting this sacrifice," said Lenoir, answering her unspoken words. "You—with your youth, your beauty, your charm—it is enough that I should have given you a moment's pain; I should indeed be base, if I took advantage of your generosity. I will leave this place; I am no longer needed here—"

For answer, Isabelle laid her palm again on his brown and sinewy hand. It was enough. He had withstood all he or any other true man could withstand.

At the Manoir de Montigny, there was anxiety, but no great unhappiness. Mademoiselle Cornélie and Isabelle had been seen going into the lighthouse—Jean and Marie had left Lenoir there; no doubt Jacques and his boat were safe. It was an adventure, probably not unpleasant to Isabelle, who yearned so after adventures, as her parents knew. At night had come a visitor—Count Valmeny. The seignior's countenance beamed when the count's retinue was recognized. He had always hankered after the match.

The count was shown into the saloon of madame, and inquired, with pointed ceremony, after mademoiselle; and then it came out that she was imprisoned in the lighthouse by the fog. But there was no danger, so the seignior hastened to assure him.

Mademoiselle Cornélie was with her, and old Jacques, and Monsieur Lenoir, the coolest and steadiest man alive; it merely meant a night's adventure, unusual, but perfectly safe.

Count Valmeny's eyes were, as Isabelle had said, too close to his nose, and somewhat marred his beauty, which was considerable. He brought them still closer to his nose, and they had an unpleasant expression, when he said, slowly:

"Lenoir is a forger of his father's name to a note for a thousand livres. The note was due to me—so I know the story. I recognized him when I was your guest, during the Winter."

It was as if a thunderbolt had fallen in the quiet little saloon, with the candles making a soft light that did not wholly reveal the malice in Valmeny's face. And then he told his story of the thousand livres. It was short, but at the end the seignior rose, and stamping his feet in his rage, cried:

"And it is that man who is at this moment in my daughter's company!"

Then there was a great commotion outside. Madame ran into the hall; Mademoiselle Cornélie, dazed. draggled and wretched, was entering, Jacques, equally dazed, bedraggled and wretched, behind her. She began to tell the story of their adventures, of Jacques putting off before Isabelle could get into the boat, of their rowing and drifting hopelessly in the fog, and, at last, making the shore, many miles away, and walking home in rain and mist; and then Jacques was interrupting her at every moment, by protesting, loudly and stupidly:

"I thought mademoiselle was in the boat. I am deaf—I can't hear—but I thought mademoiselle was in the boat!"

However, only one thing was clear— Isabelle and Lenoir were alone in the lighthouse and likely to remain there until morning.

In the wildness of his misery, the seignior would have sent every boat on the place out in the fog at midnight to search for his child; but the

uselessness of it was apparent even to him. He ran down to the shore, the count with him, and, jumping into a boat, waited—waited through the ghostly cold hours of the night—for the fog to lift, so he could go in search of his child. At the manoir, madame spent the hours on her knees, praying for Isabelle.

Daylight came, gray and wet, but the white pall still shut out the shore from the river. Suddenly, the great cloud of mist parted, a flood of glory from the rising sun turned the world to gold and silver, and out of the splendor came a boat, pulling toward the shore—a boat with Lenoir and Isabelle in it.

The seignior, full of wrath and anguish, yet had a father's heart in him. He waded out into the water up to his knees, picked Isabelle up in his arms, and carried her ashore bodily, covering her face with kisses, meanwhile calling out to Lenoir, in a menacing voice:

"Oh, viper that you are! you would have stolen my child, my one lamb! But vengeance is at hand for you!"

Lenoir, after pulling the boat ashore and carefully fastening it, stepped upon the dock. Crowds were running toward the group on the shore, and madame, in her sedan-chair, was being brought quickly down the hillside, the bearers running, and Mademoiselle Cornélie and all the women at the manoir fluttering after them. The seignior had put his daughter on the ground by that time, and had begun to pour, as was his wont, a volley of imprecations on Lenoir. The Count Valmeny was pointing with his finger, and shouting:

"Behold a forger, a thief, a fugitive

from justice!"

"Wait," said Lenoir, quietly; "yonder is madame; let her be present when I tell how I cared for her daughter."

Madame was even then getting out of the sedan-chair, and Isabelle was already in her mother's arms, weeping and smiling. A silence fell—all wished to hear what Lenoir had to say. "Mademoiselle," said he to Isabelle, taking off his hat, so that his handsome, dark head, sprinkled with gray, could be seen, "have you any complaint to make of the manner in which you were treated while in my company since yesterday afternoon?"

"Not the slightest," replied Isabelle, in a clear voice. "I was not at all alarmed, when I found myself alone in Monsieur Lenoir's care, except for the anxiety I knew my parents would suffer. I knew him to be a gentleman."

"And a forger!" added Count

Valmeny.

Madame uttered a little cry, and the seignior, with a threatening gesture, advanced toward Lenoir, who did not move an inch. He took, however, from his bosom a little flat bag, and out of it produced a letter, written in a curious, cramped hand.

"This," he said, "was written by the king himself—not by one of his secretaries; and it has the king's own private seal. Will the Sieur de Montigny follow me while I read?"

The seignior read over Lenoir's

shoulder:

VICOMTE DE ROUCOURT: I know the facts concerning the note for a thousand livres made in your father's name. It was a great folly—but the circumstances and your youth and inexperience excuse it. You have a full pardon. The part played by the Count Valmeny was most dishonorable, and I have forbidden him my presence.

Louis.

Then Lenoir also took out of the bag a parchment with seals. But the seignior was not looking at it; he was looking at Lenoir and the Count Valmeny. Lenoir had quite lost the calmly contemptuous glance with which he had first surveyed his enemy, and his black eyes were rage. Valmeny sultry with grown suddenly ugly and beastlike, as men do under the influence of They glared at the baser passions. each other, as men do who wish an excuse to be at each other's throats. Then Lenoir, recovering his coolness, said, in a tone of gentlemanlike banter:

"I am afraid, Valmeny, that you have made a fool of yourself. Since you have, no doubt, published my identity in Quebec, I shall claim the forty thousand livres my father has offered me. He owes me many times more out of my mother's fortune."

"Monsieur," said the seignior to the count, "will it please you to

have your horses ordered?"

"Perfectly," replied the count, and strode off, his followers behind him. When he was out of sight, climbing the hillside toward the stables, Lenoir spoke:

"Seignior," said he, "I will not trespass upon you. It is better that I should go—but I ask to tell my story." And he told it in a few simple

words.

When he finished, madame was weeping, and so was Isabelle. The seignior shuffled his feet, uneasily; he was sorry for Lenoir and believed in him, but was glad he was going. It would have been awkward if he had remained, and the seignior's opinion of Lenoir's judgment was increased by his quietly leaving—which he did within an hour.

But he had respectful and even kind farewells; and one person—Isabelle—shed some tears, to the amazement of her parents and all who saw her. And, strange to say, she made no effort to conceal her weeping, even from Lenoir, who carried away with him a heart that had suddenly become twenty years younger.

About three months after Lenoir's departure, the first news of him came

to the Manoir de Montigny, in the shape of a letter to the seignior, asking for Isabelle's hand. The letter signed Edmond de Roucourt. In it, he said his father was dead, and gave other particulars concerning himself —such as coming into a considerable fortune. The only mention he made of Isabelle's dowry was that it was of no consequence to him, and, if the seignior would entertain the proposal, everything would be arranged to his satisfaction.

The seignior sought madame in her saloon, and handed her the letter. She read it, and laid it down, saying:

"He is too old for her. He is

thirty-five, at least."

"He has crows' feet around his eyes, and is as lean as my hand," said the seignior.

"Our daughter has had better op-

portunities.

"Far better. His fortune is nothing to what we can give our child."

Just then, Isabelle came into the saloon, and, being wont to take liberties with her father, picked up the letter and read it, her parents watching her.

A beautiful smile broke over her face as she read. Then she said, with sparkling eyes, to the seign-

ior:

"If you will let me marry the Vicomte de Roucourt, I shall be the happiest creature in the world."

She had never been denied anything she seriously asked of the seignior, and it was then too late to begin. So with the Spring came Lenoir, and the wedding bells rang out for him and Isabelle.



HE WANTED TO KNOW

HE—Let me kiss you.

SHE—I couldn't think of it. Mother is in the next room.

"Well, you don't require a witness, do you?"



HANGING THE HOLLY

WITH Polly I chanced to be hanging the holly, With Polly, the roguish, with Polly, the sly, With Polly, who's brimming with frolic and folly, A quip on her lip and a jest in her eye.

The wind, it was grieving, and shadows were weaving Their dark web without o'er the face of the sky; Within it was merry with green leaf and berry, And Polly, close by, with a gleam in her eye.

"This holly, I know, sir, you wish mistletoe, sir!"
Cried Polly, as o'er us a wreath we hung high;
I looked at her, laughing, to see were she chaffing,
And oh, what a glint there shone out from her eye!

How like the rose-petals on which the bee settles

Her cheeks were! Her lips were the holly fruit's dye;
"Be it mistletoe, dear, a minute or so, dear!"

"A minute!" breathed Polly, with mirth in her eye.

So it's oh, to be hanging the holly with Polly! With Polly, the mischievous, Polly, the sly, With Polly, the genius of all that is jolly—A lure on her lip, and with love in her eye!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



TRUSTED

PHYSICIAN—I can't diagnose your wife's case at all. She seems to have a sprained neck, lumbago in the back, rheumatic knees and gout in both feet.

Wacgles—I know what it is. She was reading in the cozy corner and happened to fall asleep.



OH, there used to be a lady in Quebec, Who'd a wonderfully statues-que neck; All the dances she attended, Till a cold her folly ended, And her larynx was a pictures-que wreck.

CLARET AND CREAM

By Edgar Saltus

HE British Academy of Letters has, we learn, become a fact. We learn, also, that its object is uncertain. To others, perhaps; yet not to us. In the cannibal South Seas old people are knocked on the head. That is quite as it should be. Old people are tenacious of their ideas. In killing them off progress is facilitated. England is eminently conservative. Instead of filling cemeteries with the decrepit, she furnishes an Academy for them. So are the just rewarded; so, too, is conservatism maintained.

In the circumstances there is no good and valid reason why we should not have an Academy in the States—but on different lines; for that matter, on lines so ample that the clothes-line would not be omitted from them.

What we require are not the arrière-pensées of age but the frank enthusiasms of beauty. It is only from the young that one really learns, and one learns best from those who are gracious. Highways are trodden and sterile. It is in the pampas, the savannahs, the forest primeval, in lands that are virgin and minds fresh as they, that Nature gives utterance to her thoughts.

We cannot listen to her too often. She has always something new to say, or, if not new, then something so old that it seems quite novel. But it is only to the young that she says it. In default of her, let us listen to them, and, with that object, form an Academy of those who have done nothing.

There are plenty of them. From the tons of manuscript—unsolicited and with stamps inclosed—which we see daily dumped on editorial desks, we think it safe to assume that out of the wilderness light shall come. In any event, it is clear that there are enough amateurs in our midst to stock Academies by the cityful.

They have indeed done nothing yet. But therein is their charm. An Academy composed of young people who have done nothing yet would be more alluring than one made up of fossils who are unable to do anything more.

Such an Academy would be ideal and its establishment easy. Any one of the multitudinous millionairesses whom we behold floating about could usher it into being with but the wave of a cheque. Then, quite like Sappho, at Mitylene, she could beckon about her clusters of fair young women, who, from kissable lips, would instruct the world in the arts of love and life.

What more could the heart desire? Those kissable lips would tell us what we have long since learned to forget—that we all make a great fuss over things which are not worth bothering about; that constancy, for instance, which we always exact and never accord, is the result of nothing more than an absence of imagination. That would be very good for the first lesson; for there is nothing so tiresome as a woman without imagination, except a woman who has too much.

Those kissable lips, in dilating on the subject, would cite apposite examples, among others, a recent case perhaps, in which a pistol shot, fired in the dead of night, reverberated through the small-talk of the land. The echoes, subsiding, dwindled, it is true, into the nothing from which they had sprung. But, assuming that a shot there had been, what an endearing homily could be drawn on the tastefulness and tactfulness of those who, for bagatelles such as this, do their worst to raise the roof. "Il fait beau aujourd'hui," a French caricaturist made one English lord say to another, "allons tuer quelque chose." There are people who are just as eager the moment the domestic sky is obscured.

A fine rebuke they would get from fair women, and fine applause, too, would be bestowed on the gentleman who, discovered behind the curtains of a boudoir and being noisily asked by the proprietor what he was doing there, answered, with an assurance entirely Apollonian, "I am taking a walk."

In this way we should acquire instruction, not merely in manners, but in repartee. As a people we need it. As a people we are, of course, delightful; but we are neither witty nor well bred. By way of compensation we are highly moral, or think ourselves so, which amounts to quite the same thing. Our novels are padded with purity and scenery, and our newspapers with hypocrisy and cant. Were proof of our morality required, there it is. But through some defect of the climate —unless it be of the schools—we lack the higher morality which was inculcated by Epicurus, by Epictetus, by one of the Popes, Boniface VIII., which consists in accepting with gaiety and indulgence such accidents as we cannot avoid. But not a bit of it. We make the mistake of taking ourselves seriously when there is nothing earthly worth taking seriously at all except, indeed, the quality of the champagne which we drink and the giving and the acceptance of invitations to dine.

Apropos whereto those fair women would have a word or two for the metropolitan hostess. They would tell her that, of all forms of iniquity, dining is the most barbarous. In primitive days people fed in common through fear of being attacked. As often as not the fear was justified. Nowadays

people feed in common through the more dreadful fear of being bored, and succeed very perfectly in becoming so. "Venez, messieurs," said a numbered Louis of France, "allons nous ennuyer ensemble." That is the way modern invitations read. Yet, since such things must be, those who love righteousness without abhorring Mammon should throw out the sweets. In this sanitary age flattery is the only variety that can be hygienically assimilated. Of that the least among us can never have enough.

In discussing our modes, caprices, passions and disillusions—which is about all we can call our very own, except, indeed, our further charm—the fact, as Goethe noted, that we are all of us capable of crime—though it be but that of bad taste, which is assuredly the worst of all—in discussing these things those fair women would pass from grave to gay and display for us the bewilderments and witcheries of life as it is.

They would show us that it is a continuous catastrophe. They would show us that, whether it be that of an individual or of a nation, life is but a diffusion of stupidity and vulgarity. The showing would not be cheerful, but it would have the merit of being exact.

They would not stop there, either. From the premises advanced it would be logical and agreeable to assume that life on earth is a sort of leprosy, the result, perhaps, of a morbid secretion from which healthy planets are immune.

And, after all, why not? Sir Robert Ball, not long since, informed us that, within the relatively narrow sphere to which observation is confined, there are not less than three hundred million worlds. Beyond the uttermost of these worlds there are other planets, other systems, other suns. Wherever imagination, in its weariness, would set a limit, there is space begun.

In view of which, and of more, too, it becomes humorous to suppose that the vulgarity and stupidity on exhibition here are indefinitely repeated

throughout space. On the moon, life there may be. The moon was once part of the earth. It may, in consequence, have been infected with the original complaint. It is possible, also, that, through atmospheric and aqueous affinities, Mars has been exposed to the same disease. From Venus and Mercury science has discovered that such affinities have been withheld. But of the other worlds and systems we know so little that it is idle to attempt to know less.

Yet, though one and all of these worlds move in a mystery which is due to our ignorance, we may pierce it with the hope that they have been preserved from the bewilderments and witcheries of which life on this planet is the cause.

In displaying these things the cluster of fair young women would indicate the forethought of Providence, which has provided us with ample compensations. For there are compensations. There are two of them—and two is a good many.

We do not appre-The first is evil. ciate evil at its worth. It is the handicraft of Satan. We do not appreciate him as we should. He is a great artif-He is more; he is a great artist. It was he who created this compensation, which is a jewel, a luxury and a And naturally. Evil necessity in one. is the counterpart of excellence. Both have their roots in nature. One could not be destroyed without the other. For every shape of evil there is a corresponding form of good. Virtue would be meaningless were it not for vice. Beauty would have no charm were it not for ugliness. Genius would have no message were it not for bores.

Evil is therefore a jewel, and highly salutary at that. Were it eliminated from the scheme of things, life would have no savor, and joy no delight. Existence would provide the monotony of silence. Happiness and unhappiness would be synonymous states.

The other jewel which Providence has set in our tiara is superstition. What would we do without that? A superstition is a hope. Besides, is it not nicer to be wrong in a given belief

than not to have it at all? Of course it is. We believe what we wish, never what we should.

It is fortunate that we can. Were it otherwise the vitriol which Science has thrown at Faith would have set Society mad. But not a bit of it. Society turned its back. The attitude is commendable; for it is on superstition that we all subsist—superstition by day, dreams at night.

Superstition covers a multitude of stupidities. But it is ductile and plastic. It lends itself to combinations which are as marvelous as they are enchanting. We are indebted to it for the masterpieces of art, for the splendor of cathedrals, for the seductions of song, for real literature and good verse. We owe to it everything, even to the amenities of life. Superstition is the essential ingredient of everything that It is the basis of ethics is charming. and the foundation of beauty. It has decorated life and robbed death of its grotesqueness. It is, therefore, in accordance with the order of things and the necessities of man.

Truth, on the other hand, is vicious. We may sigh for it, but it is best that we should sigh in vain. Truth is hard. It is rigid. It is not ductile nor is it plastic. It does not yield. It is vicious, and, being vicious, it bites. Get in its way, and, unless you have had the forethought to antisepticize yourself with indifference, it will cause a hydrophobia for which the only Pasteur Institute is time.

Superstition is just the reverse. It is amiable and consolatory. It is indeed a jewel. We should hold fast to it. We should hold fast to that which is good and not try to prove anything.

From maxims of this fastidious morality, deductions follow. It will be seen that life is not all that fancy might paint it. It will be suspected that its compensations are not as compensatory as they look. From these premises it will be argued that there must be an error somewhere, a big mistake, a stitch dropped from the original scheme of things, a blunder, ex-

tending back, perhaps, to the parturitions of the primal protoplasm.

Such argument is entirely valid. We esteem ourselves at a value which we do not possess; for no reason other than innate conceit, we fancy ourselves ad-That fancy is so comforting vanced. that with it we have developed an idolatry of the most amusing kind. We have developed the worship of self. The unction of that worship is so thick that through it we fail to see how stupid We fail to see that the most we look. gracious and indulgent sentiment which we can have for ourselves is not esteem, but contempt. We have not advanced; we have deviated. It is not from apes that we should have descended, though better, perhaps, apes than reptiles; yet, had evolution had us really in its charge, instead of being superior animals we should be human butterflies, subsisting on dew and desire, with youth, winged and beautiful, for the crown and conclusion of life.

A life such as that, untroubled by dentists, unburdened by tailors, untrammeled by bills, unencumbered by bores, a life free, volatile and quasidivine, a life passed among flowers and suave perfumes, a life of sheer poetry which, but for some archaic error, might have been ours—a life such as that, however fantastic, would, to say

the least, be more agreeable than one such as this, in which we do little of more importance than assist with the passivity which good breeding requires at the loss of our illusions, our umbrellas and our hair.

Et voilà, et cetera and so forth.

It is cups of claret and cream of this order that, in the ideal Academy which we advocate, clusters of fair women would convey, and, in conveying, uplift.

For women, particularly when pretty, are the natural instructors of man. Their intuitions are more valuable than the certainties of mathematics, their insight surer than the demonstrations which logic provides. They are abundantly lacking in sense, it is true. when has reason governed the world? It is by the heart-strings alone that men can be pulled, and it is only women that can do it. In addition, they have the immense advantage of being all alike, in that they are, every one of them, different. And a cluster of them delivering the messages of Nature, to whom, through that weakness which is their strength, they are nearer than man, would constitute not merely an ideal Academy, but give the world fresh conceptions of beauty and therewith a taste, as yet uncultivated, for claret and cream.



WITHIN the cannery all day
The Brown twins sit on chairs;
And many men do stroll that way
To watch that pair pare pears.



SO HE GETS AROUND

E THEL—Gracious, Mabel, why do you lace so awfully whenever Cholly Lovsik comes around?

MABBL—Oh, the poor fellow's arm is so short!

THE LAY OF THE LOBSTER

By Albert Lee

THE lobster is a kind of bird,
Concerning which you may have heard.
He dwells beneath the sea;
He has a tail, but has no wings;
I don't think that he ever sings,
But crawls most gracefully.

Now, once a lobster, young and green, Who'd never seen a soup tureen, Came scrambling through the surf; A maiden, who was standing there, Picked up that foolish young lobstair, And took him on the turf.

The maiden to the lobster said,
"I'll take you out and paint you red,
I'll give you a hot time!"
The lobster thought this would be great,
And did not realize till late
His ignorance sublime.

The lobster said it would be fine
To have some supper and some wine;
He thought he was a rounder.
The maid, though, knew her little trick;
She got him in hot water quick,
And left him there to flounder.

She ripped the lobster up the back, And gave his skull a lusty crack, Then roasted him quite well. And when she'd got all that there was To get out of that lobster's claws, She threw away the shell.

I'm sure that no one well can fail
To grasp the moral of this tale—
It's very plain to see.
A lobster is a lobster now,
He is a lobster anyhow,
And will forever be.

FROM THE BOOK OF LOVE

THE breath of God broods o'er us where we lie Beneath the star-sown garment of the sky Whispering life's secret in our willing ears— Oh, listen, love, before the breath goes by!

My raptured soul is drunken with your love; The strange, narcotic sweetness of your love Lulls me and drops me in a veil of dream— Draws me and drops me in the deep of love.

There is a sweeter sound than seraph hears; The mystic rhythm of the pulsing years Holds less of lure and wonder to the soul— The music of your heart-beats to my ears!

Why do I worship you? I cannot tell.
What lures the wild bee to the asphodel?
Why does the fond moon draw the sighing sea?
Perhaps the lovelorn nightingale can tell.

How swift the merry sand runs in the glass! The midnight daughters steal along the grass, Peering in silence through their purple hair. Draw near, love, for this golden hour will pass!

I am the sun to warm you with my heat,
I am the dream to make your slumber sweet,
I am the moon to watch you all the night,
I am the sandals underneath your feet!

ELSA BARKER.



AS NEAR AS HE COULD COME TO IT

WILLIE—Pa, what is a goody-goody?
FATHER—As a rule, my boy, it is a person who is no good.



WHAT CAUSED THE DELAY

ENA—Why doesn't Jack Fairlygood marry Belle?
ETHEL—I'm not quite sure that I am going to get Charlie Bonds.

A LITERARY AGENT

By Owen Oliver

I was exactly three weeks before Christmas. I was thinking, with my chin on my hands, when Jane came into the dining-room. I am Molly Marchant, daughter of the famous author. He is not so famous as he ought to be. I have kept house since I was quite young. Now I am thirteen. Jane is our general. She is very much like other generals. She does everything wrong and makes me cross; but she means well.

"Wot yer worritin' about, miss?"

she asked.

"I'm not worrying," I said; "I'm considering."

She shook her head. "About them

'ere Christmas presents?"

I nodded. "I meant to get a stationery case for father, and a pistol with a spring for Bob, and a box of mounted infantry for Tommy."

"So yer told me." I had discussed the matter with Jane to make it clear to myself. I did not wish her advice, of course; but I had to talk to some one. "They'd be a sov'rin, yer said, an' yer was goin' ter save it out of the 'ousekeepin'."

"I can't save it out of the house-keeping now," I stated, mournfully. She put the corner of her apron in her mouth, and bit it. That is her way of thinking. Judging by results, it is not

a good way.

"W'y can't yer?"

"I had to make up the gas money." She grunted, understandingly. We always have a little difficulty about the gas and water and rates.

"Father's stories haven't been selling

so well lately."

"'E orter put in more lords an' la-

dies an' murders," Jane pronounced.
"It's 'igh life wot people want nowa-

days."

"You don't know anything about it, Jane," I said, severely, "and your tastes are low." If people had better taste, father's stories would sell better. He has often told me so.

"I know wot I like, an' so does other people," she persisted. Jane is stubborn, and thinks she knows things when she doesn't. She represents the public, father says, when editors make him angry. Editors are very trying. They accept other people's things that aren't nearly so good as his.

"If you know so much," I suggested, "perhaps you can tell me how

to get the sovereign."

She pulled at her apron, till I was afraid she would draw some teeth. "There was four an' tuppence of yer own, a fortnight since," she observed; "wot's become of it? Gas, too?"

"Two shillings of it," I admitted. I told father it belonged to the house-keeping, or he wouldn't have taken it.

"An' the rest?"

"The boys," I said, apologetically.
"They aren't very old, and they beg so hard for pennies, poor little fellows!"

"More fool you!"

"If you cannot address me properly, Jane," I said, with dignity, "you can go down-stairs. For goodness' sake, leave your apron alone!"

She pulled it out, with a jerk. "I was thinkin' I could do with five shillin's less this month," she said, turning redder. She is naturally red.

"Nonsense!" I cried, in horror. "The idea!" She looked hurt, so I hastened to soothe her. As I have

said, she means well. "It wouldn't be right, Jane, and I couldn't; but it is so good of you to want to do it for them."

"'Tain't for them—it's for you."
Jane likes me. I don't know why.
"Yer'd go without nothink yerself
for them boys—the greedy little
wretches!"

"Jane! How dare you!" They are the dearest little boys in the world; only, Jane is so stupid and doesn't understand how to manage them.

"They don't think of nothink but their own selves," she grumbled.

"How can you expect them to think, at their age?" Bob is eight,

and Tommy six.

"Come to that, you ain't no hage yerself." I froze. "Though yer manage wonderful, as I was sayin' to Mrs. Green, w'en she come for the washin' this very mornin', and——"

I thawed. "That reminds me," I interrupted. "I wanted to consult you about the washing." You can do what you like with Jane, if you pretend to take her advice. "Do you think we could do the ironing at home? It would save eighteen pence a week."

She pursed her lips. "We'd do 'em," she pronounced; "but whether the master 'ud wear 'em afterward—that's the questi'n. Never no ironer, I wasn't."

"I won't tell him about it," I suggested; "then he won't notice, per-

haps."

Jane shook her head. "'E's got is proper senses," she said, "though e do write potery."

"But we'll try, won't we, Jane?"
She grinned. "Yer know 'ow to

git over a body, miss," she said.

So we starched and ironed father's things; and, on Saturday, I put them carefully away in the wardrobe. On Sunday morning, I heard him stamping around the room and talking to himself. I fancied he was working out a plot, with a disinherited son or a villain in it. Then his door opened suddenly.

"Molly!" he shouted. "Molly! You must change this confounded washerwoman. The collars are rags—perfect rags; as for the shirts—she's starched nothing but the tails."

she's starched nothing but the tails."

"I—I'm sorry, dad," I said. "I

—I didn't think—that it—I'll change
her." I didn't mean my voice to be
choky, but it was. He noticed it
directly, and ran down-stairs and
put his arm around me. He is the
nicest father that could be.

"You little brick!" he said. "It was only my fussiness, really. They aren't half bad; and the stiffness will

soon wear out of them!"

But I could see that they wouldn't do; so I decided to try some other way

of saving the sovereign.

People talk about saving money as if it were easy, but it isn't. Jane said the proper way was to look in the papers—especially the religious ones—for something. So I searched in the Evangelical Trumpeter, till I found this:

How I make 35s. a week in spare time. Persons of all ages and sexes can do it. Full particulars on receipt of 13d. in stamps.

Of course, I know that people who write advertisements sometimes exaggerate a little. Still, I thought, if it was only a pound a week it would do very well. So I sent the stamps, with a letter explaining matters. The next day but one I had this answer:

DEAR MISS:

I make my 35s. a week out of foolish people who answer my advertisement. I cannot recommend the plan to you, so I return your stamps. If you are a sensible little girl, you will not waste money in answering advertisements.

Yours truly, Makin & Co.

P. S.—Your best way to get a sovereign is to cash the inclosed.

The inclosed was a postal order for twenty shillings.

Jane bit her apron less fiercely than usual, when I showed her the answer.

"'E's a sharp 'un!" she said, admiringly. "An' a bit sorft too, or 'e'd never 'ave sent yer back the stamps."

"I think he's rather good," I said.
"I wish—" I looked at the postal order, and sighed. If only there had been an excuse for keeping it!

"It'll buy yer presents fer yer," That decided me. said Jane. know that what Jane proposes

almost certain to be wrong.

"It won't do anything of the sort," I said, decidedly. "I shall send it back this morning." I did not want to have time to change my mind; so I sat down, and wrote at once:

DEAR MR. MAKIN & Co.:

I think it is very kind of you to send back my stamps and the postal order especially. But I think it belongs to other people, and some of them want it more than I do. So I am sorry to return it, if you don't mind.

Yours truly, MOLLY MARCHANT.

P. S.—It was very kind of you, and I hope you won't do it any more, because it isn't right.

P. S. 2.—I hope this will find you well as

it leaves me.

P. S. 3.—It really was very kind of you.

I ran to the pillar-box, and posted Then I began studying the advertisements that did not ask for stamps. There could be no harm, I thought, in answering them. seemed the best:

Young gentleman would like to share his fortune with a young lady. She must be attractive and quite young. Reply in confidence, stating income, etc., to X, 2789, care of this paper.

I wasn't sure that I was attractive, but I thought I must be young enough; and, as I had not any income, he would easily see that I was the right sort of person to share with. So, I wrote, saying that, if he was really determined to give away part of his fortune, I was willing to take some of it. I explained that I did not wish more than £1, as that would just buy the presents. Also, I promised that I would pay it back, if he ever became poor, and I was rich. After several days, an answer came.

DEAR MISS MOLLY:

If you took my fortune you would have to take me with it. This would not be a good bargain, for your share would not amount to the modest sovereign that you want. I hope you will get it. I am sure you are a good little girl.

Yours very truly,

X, 2789.

I could not understand why he offered to share his fortune, if he hadn't any to share; but, perhaps, he only wanted some one rich to marry him. Anyhow, I thought that it was no use answering advertisements any more.

I tried to save all I could, but could not save enough. The week before Christmas the amount was 2s. 3½d. The next week there were the Christmas things to buy, and father could only spare 10s. extra, which wasn't nearly enough for them. Boys want such a lot of cakes and things. I asked the baker and grocer and butcher if they would mind waiting for their money, but they said that they wouldn't wait. Indeed, they wanted me to pay off some of what was already owing, which was ridiculous. I thought of selling my brooch and bracelets; but father had told me that I must not.

"I don't believe that I shall be able to buy any presents at all," I said, miserably. "The boys will be disappointed." Jane had gone and told them, like the great stupid she is.

"Serve'em right," she said, viciously. "The tiresome little monkeys, playin' with the water an' makin' sich a mess, an' runnin' up the clean steps w'en I jest done 'em, an'-

"Boys always do those things," I

told her.

"An' git smacked, if they 'as their dues. If I was you, I'd-

"No, you wouldn't," I said: "if you'd promised your mother to be good to them, when she—she—" had to turn away to the window. never can bear to think about that.

Jane did not answer, for once. She was very good all the afternoon, and made the boys some rock cakes, of her own accord.

"I was thinkin'," she said, when they had gone to bed, "as wot you want is advice."

"There's no one to advise me," I said. I couldn't well ask father about his own present, you see.

"There's them hanswers to correspondents," said Jane, "like the Home Jewel, wot calls 'erself 'Aunt Anne,' as tells yer orl about heverythink."

"Yes," I said; "I suppose she would know; though the pudding I made from her recipe wasn't very good. But, perhaps, that was because I left out all the things that were too expensive."

"She'll tell yer 'ow to make a sov'rin' easy," said Jane, confidently.

"There isn't time to get an answer before Christmas."

"W'y don't yer call an' see 'er? She's always writin' as 'ow she'd like to meet 'er 'dear young fren's.'"

"I'm half a mind to go this after-

noon," I said. I went.

The offices were in a dirty back street in the City, up four flights of stairs. I knocked at the door for five minutes, and nobody answered. So I looked in. The outer room was small and untidy. The only furniture was a deal table and two office stools. A red-haired boy was sitting on one of them, trying to balance a ruler on his chin. I knew that he must be either very deaf or very rude. So I didn't know what to say.

"What do you want?" he asked,

when the ruler fell.

"I want to see Aunt Anne."

"Never had one," he replied, picking up the ruler.

"She writes for your paper."

"Never heard of her."
"But I know she does."

"If you know, it's no use my arguing." He made another attempt to balance the ruler, and ignored me. This made me angry. I should have liked to knock the ruler off his chin, but I thought that it would not be quite ladylike to do so.

"Perhaps you will be so good as to tell the editor that I want to see her," I said, severely. He burst into a roar of laughter. "You are a very rude boy. I shall write and tell her about

you."

He laughed all the more. "Oh, Lor'!" he cried; "you'll be the death of me!"

"I don't see anything to laugh at," I said.

He restrained another roar, and laid down the ruler on the table. "The old lady is very retiring," he said, struggling with a grin. "She won't let any one see her. Straight."

"I've come up to London on purpose," I protested. "It's very important." He shook his head. "Do

ask her, please."

He stared hard at me. He did not seem a bad-natured boy. "I can't," he said, seriously. "It's as much as my place is worth." I felt the tears coming into my eyes. I think he guessed that I was disappointed.

"Look here, miss," he said, quite kindly; "can you tell me what it's about? Perhaps I could get her to send you a message." He dusted the other stool for me, and I sat down. I could see he was not really a bad sort of boy. So I told him all about it. When I had finished, he balanced the ruler on his hand.

"Never had a sister myself," he said, thoughtfully. I did not see what this had to do with the question. "If I ask him—I mean Aunt Anne—he—that is she—will only say 'no.'"
"You might ask her," I entreated.

"You might ask her," I entreated. He balanced the ruler again, while he considered. "Tell you what," he said, "I'll just show you in. Then he—I mean Aunt Anne—will have to see you. You might get over—er—her." He looked at me, critically. "You're that sort."

"You are kind," I said, gratefully. He blushed. "Come along," he said. "It's Aunt Anne in here." He opened a door, and pushed me in.

"Young lady to see Aunt Anne," he said, and banged the door behind me.

I could not see anybody, at first, the room was so full of smoke—which struck me as very strange. Then I heard a deep voice say, "Confound the boy!" Which seemed stranger. Then I discovered a small, elderly gentleman, sitting at a table covered with proofs and papers, smoking a very large pipe, as small gentlemen generally do.

"I—I beg your pardon," I said; "I

wanted to see Aunt Anne."

"Ah!" said the gentleman. "Umer-yes. Won't you sit down?" He cleared some books off a chair, and I sat down. "Perhaps you will tell me what you want, and I will speak to her. I am the editor."

"Oh!" I drew my chair away, in

He smiled. "I am a very harmless one," he assured me. "Don't you like editors?"

"No-o," I said; "not generally." He looked grieved. "You see," I explained, "they don't treat father properly."

"What a shame!" he said. "Your

—?"' father is-

"William Marchant—the great nov-

elist," I said, proudly.

"Ah, yes! He has written several stories for us. Very nice stories—very nice indeed."

"Then," I said, "why don't you pay

him more for them?"

He laughed. "Are you his literary

agent?"

"Oh, no!" I said. Then he asked me some questions, and, at last, I told him what I wanted. He listened very attentively, playing with a paperknife.

"I am sure Aunt Anne would like to help you," he said; "but I am afraid she can't. You see, money is very hard to make nowadays—even on a paper." He sighed. I noticed that his clothes weren't much newer than father's. "Aunt Anne gets paid after contributors like your father; and, if there isn't enough—" He shrugged "I doubt if she has a his shoulders. sovereign to spare."

"I don't want her to give it to me!"

I said, in horror. He smiled.

"I'm afraid you are rather young to earn money—except from your father."

"Father gives me all he can," I assured him, "he does, really." He bowed in agreement. "But stories don't bring in much, you know; and they don't get paid for very quickly not so quickly as we buy things. That's the difficulty."

"No," he said, sympathetically, "I know they don't. I wish we could pay him more, and pay it quicker, my dear; indeed, I do."

"I thought perhaps Aunt Anne could tell me how to earn something."

He shook his head. "I don't see any way. I wish I could—really."

"Don't you think, perhaps, Aunt Anne-

"My dear," he said, "to tell you a

secret, I am Aunt Anne, and every one else on the paper."

"Oh," I cried, "I see!" I suppose they couldn't pay her any more because they were poor. I rose to go, and he opened the door for me, as if I were grown up. Then he suddenly shut it again.

"Wait a minute," he cried, quickly. "Perhaps—would you like to earn ten

shillings?"

I laughed. "Of course I should," I

said.

"I was thinking—er—I want an illustration for the paper. If I were to sketch you, now-

"I don't think I'm worth ten shillings," I said, thoughtfully. "I don't think I am nice-looking, really; though people have said—but, of course, I didn't believe them."

"I am the best judge of that," he assured me. So I sat down again, and he began doing something on a piece of paper. After about three minutes, he said he had finished, and went to a cupboard, I suppose to get out the money.

It seemed very strange that he had done ten shillings' worth of drawing so quickly, and I rather wanted to see how nice I looked; that is, if I did look nice. So, when his back was turned, I just reached over, and picked up the paper. There was nothing on it but a few lines—not a proper picture at all.

"Oh!" I said. "You shouldn't! You were going to give me the money. You are very kind, but—" I began to cry, and I didn't wish him to see me. So, I ran right out of the room, through the outer place and down the stairs. The red-haired boy ran after me, and caught me on the last flight.

"What's he said to you?" he de-

manded, fiercely. "I'll go and have it out with him."

"No, no!" I cried. "He was very kind, indeed; and so are you. But I must go; please don't stop me." I ran away into the street. When I turned the corner, the red-haired boy was looking at me from the door. He is a nice, kind boy, I am sure.

When I arrived home, I pretended to be very cheerful; but I wasn't. It was Jane's evening out, luckily, so I didn't have to talk to her. After I had put the boys to bed, I sat down in the armchair by the fire, and cried. I know it is silly to cry; but sometimes you don't

care if things are ever so silly.

I sobbed till I was nearly asleep. Father let himself in with his latchkey, without my hearing him. When he saw that I had been crying, he made a fuss over me. So I told him about the sovereign that I couldn't save. He was very kind. He always is. He made out that I do things ever so well. Of course, I know that I don't; but I like him to think so. Also, he said that he hoped to manage the presents for the boys. He hinted at something for me, but I would not hear of that. I know I must be very expensive to him.

We were still talking, when the postman knocked at the door. I was afraid it was only a "return," but it was not. It was a small letter, like those that bring acceptances and cheques.

We read it together, and I clapped

my hands, when I saw that it was from the editor of the *Highflyer*. Father has often wished that they would take his things, because they pay so well. This is what the letter said:

DEAR MR. MARCHANT:

The editor of the Home Yewel, who is an old friend of mine, has shown me the contribution named hereunder, which he thought merited higher remuneration than he could pay. I am pleased to accept it, and inclose a cheque for £10, which, he said, you would accept as satisfactory. He desired me to mention that this amount includes £1 commission to your literary agent, who called upon him this afternoon.

I shall be pleased to consider your work

at any time.

Yours truly, LAWRENCE HEIGH.

Father read the letter three times, and each time he looked more smiling.

"Who the dickens does he mean by my literary agent?" he said. I held him by both sides of his coat, and made him look at me.

"He means-me!" I said.

Then I told him all about it, from beginning to end. He put his arm around me, and kept holding me tighter and tighter. When I had finished, he didn't say anything; he only looked at mother's picture over the mantelpiece. He was quiet for so long that I touched his arm, gently.

"What are you thinking about, daddy?" I asked. "Mother?" He

nodded.

"And her little girl," he said, with a catch in his voice, "the best little girl in the world!"



THE REASON

WHY are there still some bachelors left
To litter the walks of life—
Trembling and mum,
Dolefully dumb,
With never the nerve to wife?
Why are there still some bachelors left
To falter and blush and grope?
It is plain to me,
And you will agree,
'Tis to give some old maid hope.

A BIT OF COLOR

(Paris, 1896)

By Arthur Macy

OH, damsel fair at the Porte Maillot,
With the soft blue eyes that haunt me so,
Pray, what should I do
When a girl like you
Bestows her smile, her glance and her sigh
On the first fond fool that is passing by,
Who listens and longs as the sweet words flow
From her pretty, red lips at the Porte Maillot?

There were lips as red ere you were born, Now wreathed in smiles, now curled in scorn,

And other bright eyes
With their truth and lies,
That broke the heart and turned the brain
Of many a tender, lovelorn swain;
But never, I ween, brought half the woe
That comes from the lips at the Porte Maillot.

A charming picture, there you stand, A perfect work from a master's hand!

With your face so fair
And your wondrous hair,
Your glorious color, your light and shade,
And your classic head that the gods have made,
Your cheeks with crimson all aglow,
As you wait for a lover at the Porte Maillot.

There are gorgeous tints in the jeweled crown, There are brilliant shades when the sun goes down;

But your lips vie
With the western sky,
And give to the world so rare a hue
That the painter must learn his art anew,
And the sunset borrow a brighter glow
From the lips of the girl at the Porte Maillot.

Come, tell me truly, fair-haired youth, Do her eyes flash love, her lips speak truth? Or does she beguile

With her glance and smile,
And burn you, spurn you all day long,
With a Circe's art and a siren's song?
Ah, would that your foolish heart might know
The lie in the heart at the Porte Maillot!

SWEET SORROW

O you know," she said, with a little laugh, "I almost hate to see you go." "Do you really?" He spoke gratefully. "But you'll soon forget me, when once I'm gone."

"Yes," she assented, "I suppose that's so."
His face fell a trifle. "Oh, come now, that's rather rough on a fellow."
"I don't see why. I never would have been so impolite as to say it, myself, but, since you've said it, what earthly use is there in denying it, simply because it's unpleasant to hear it stated plainly?"

"Do you want to make me unhappy?"

"Why, no."

"Then don't forget me."

"There are so many people to remember," she murmured, apologetically. "Oh, if you find it such a task, by all means forget me," he said, savagely.

"Yes?" interrogatively.

Suddenly his mood changed, and he laughed. "Do you know, you are the dearest, most exasperating girl in the world, and what I am going to do without you I can't imagine."

"Yes," she said, demurely, "it will be hard for you, I suppose; but the

world is full of girls.'

"Not for me," emphatically. "What will you do all the mornings and

afternoons, when I am gone? Won't you please be just a little lonely?"

"Probably, at first; but, as you say, it won't last long. Some other man will come along, you know, who will help me kill time. We've had a jolly time these long days, and become very good friends," she concluded, meditatively; "and yet, we really know amazingly little about each other."

"Yes," said he, with a smile, watching her slyly; "you don't even know

that I'm not a married man."

"Oh," she replied, coolly, "I supposed that you were, of course; you are such a happy, contented-looking man. I always assume that men of that type are married; it saves so many complications."

"Then you've not believed a word I've said to you?"

- "Certainly not; it would have spoiled it all, if I had thought you in earnest."
- "But I was," he said, gravely, rising and holding out his hand. "Good-bye, Miss Lacy."

"Good-bye," she said, with a bored air.

He walked slowly to the door. She looked steadily out of the window. He opened the door. A soft little voice behind him said, plaintively:

"Are you, sure enough, married, Mr. Damon?"

And it all began again.

ANNA M. WALKER.



WHEW!

RIGGE-Yes! The Amazons were a warlike race of women. But what made you think of them? BAGGE—I was just trying to imagine an Amazon bargain-sale.

THE IMMACULATE ONE

By Felix Noël

POSSESS an organization," said the Immaculate One, "that really causes me im-

mense suffering."

"How sad!" murmured the youngold lady with a choice assortment of specimens of the animal and vegetable kingdoms on her hat. She was watching the door for a certain Man, and felt not the most microscopic interest in the Immaculate One and his woes.

"Yes," continued he, plaintively; "take music, for instance—such a delight to the world at large, it is often a source of the very greatest anguish

to me.'

He paused, but the lady's eyes and mind were on the door. She became sensible of the pause at last, and said,

sweetly, "Y-e-e-s?"

The Immaculate One was aggrieved. His audiences—generally consisting of one, for he did not shine when addressing a number—were, as a rule, more attentive. He sighed, and at that instant the Man arrived.

"You were saying?" said his com-

panion, interrogatively.

"That I frequently suffer excessively from the very things that give less finely strung natures the greatest pleasure."

"Well, certainly," said the lady, one can suffer a great deal from bad

music. I have experienced such suffering myself, though I am not a very

musical person."

"Oh, it is not music only," continued the Immaculate One; "imperfection of any kind causes me suffering. I have, before now, passed sleepless nights and miserable days, after merely seeing a picture that did injustice to one of my ideal subjects. Fact, I assure you."

"You paint, do you not?" asked

his companion.

"Very little, v-e-ry little," answered the Immaculate One. He would have died rather than own that he hardly knew one end of the brush from the other. "I love the Great Mother too well to malign her by my puny efforts to portray her charms."

His companion looked mystified.

"You mean—?" she said.

"I mean the Great Mother, Nature," replied he, a little impatiently; then to himself, "Good heavens! of whom did she imagine I was speaking?"

Somebody struck a few notes on the piano. The Immaculate One put on the expression of a martyr ready to be led out to the lions, and the Engaged Girl—engaged to Him—looked sweet sympathy in his direction.

"Won't you sing us something?" It was the Son of the House, to the

Engaged Girl.

Her eyes sought the face of the Immaculate One, which became even more expressive of heavenly resignation, and she replied, hurriedly: "Oh, no; please do not ask me, Jack; I really do not sing well enough to inflict my performances on people in general."

"Rubbish!" said Jack Compton, savagely. He had loved her since her pinafore days, and he did not love the Immaculate One. "You always

used to sing for us, Muriel."

"Oh, that was in the days before I knew any better," she said, gaily, though she would have liked dearly

to please her old playmate, and she

loved singing as a bird does.

Jack turned away with a little anger in his eye, and Muriel's sister, Edith, looked after him with a bitter pang in her heart, and over her fair face there swept a flush of resentment against the Immaculate One. For, as usual, it was a game of crosspurposes, and Edith loved Jack, and Jack had eyes for no one but Muriel, and Muriel loved the Immaculate One, and the Immaculate One loved—so his enemies said—himself.

"You will play something for us, won't you?" said Jack, in his most persuasive tones, appearing ten minutes later at the elbow of the lady with the hat, whose performances, as was universally acknowledged, were calculated to strike terror into the soul of

an organ-grinder.

That virgin, who was by this time reduced to the last stage of boredom, rose with alacrity, saying:

"Oh, with pleasure, Mr. Compton! But you will accompany me on your

delightful banjo?"

"Of course," said Jack, promptly. He played that instrument execrably, and knew it, and the two twanged and strummed and sang about "darkies" and "coons" and "pickaninnies." The Immaculate One had a nervous headache. That mysterious malady invariably attacked him when he was not the centre of attraction. Jack Compton rejoiced unspeakably and wished it worse.

They were married. It was a quiet wedding, very; there was no bridesmaid but Edith, who had cried till her nose resembled the color of a tomato, and was consequently not ornamental, while her disgust with the whole affair interfered with her usefulness. Muriel would have liked the customary pretty fuss, with white satin and orange blossoms and girl friends about her; but the Immaculate One shuddered at the first intimation of such a thing.

"Do not, my dearest," he said, in his most impressive manner, "bring in the vulgar herd to share in the most sacred moment of our lives." So the vulgar herd, as represented by Muriel's nearest friends and relatives, stayed away; and the Immaculate One bought himself a diamond pin with the money that would otherwise have gone in bouquets and bracelets, and gave Edith what he called "a simple souvenir," in the shape of a silver brooch, value three-and-sixpence.

And Jack Compton went to Africa, and the wedded pair went to Venice, where the odors preyed on the Immaculate One's nerves, and caused the stock of Byronic quotations, which he had carefully laid up for the occasion,

to remain undelivered.

He did not shine in foreign society, either, his knowledge of Continental tongues proving—much to his wife's surprise — of a purely Ollendorfian character; and the Immaculate One found himself playing a very second violin, indeed. He tried to save his dignity by taking refuge in an air of lofty abstraction, while Muriel chattered away fluently in unknown tongues; and the nervous headaches threatened to assume a chronic form, until the Immaculate One found that a foreign climate "did not suit him," and they returned to England much earlier than they had intended doing, greatly to Muriel's satisfaction.

Then the house-furnishing, which had been delayed until their return,

began.

"This is lovely, Lawrence, isn't it?" said Muriel, brightly, looking affectionately at the pretty drawing-room, fresh from the hands of the decorator; "the piano can stand there, and the beautiful cabinet mother gave me will just fit in there, and—"

She paused. Her husband's face was gradually assuming an expression that was beginning to be familiar to her. She had found herself thinking of it lately as his "invalid manner."

"I am very sorry, dear," said he, "but I really think that this room cannot be appropriated for a drawing-room; it has not struck you, I suppose, that this is the only room of any size

in the house looking south, and a southern aspect is a necessity of life to me."

"Oh, but, Lawrence!" exclaimed the girl, in dismay, "you cannot want a study of this size. And where are all our pretty things to go? No other room in the house will hold them."

The Immaculate One's hand went to his forehead. "Oh, certainly, my dear Muriel," in a suffering voice, "if you prefer the symmetrical arrangement of the furniture to my health—I say no more—but I should have thought—But there!"

And, of course, she yielded, having the usual "good cry"—for which she hated herself—in secret. And the pretty things were crammed into a room much too small for them, or dispersed about the bedrooms. Muriel's girl friends came and admired the drawing-room, and went away and exchanged notes about her lack of taste; and Edith came and called the Immaculate One, "a selfish brute," whereupon Muriel relieved her feelings by having a hearty quarrel with her.

They—the husband and wife—were to have musical evenings together; they had planned them during their courtship; Muriel played the violin, and the Immaculate One played—or thought he played—the piano. The girl, who loved music, had built many pretty castles in the air. So they began

"My dear Muriel"—thus the Immaculate One, having lost his place in the middle of a passage through undue attention to his fingers—"my dear Muriel," in an aggrieved tone, "can you not hear that your A is flat?"

Muriel gave obedient attention to the "A," while her husband hammered that note impatiently on the piano, seeking meanwhile to regain the lost place. Five minutes later: "Slower, Muriel, slower! Good gracious! have you no idea of time? I really think, my dear," with much condescension, "you had better practise steadily for a few weeks before we try again; anything like inaccuracy in music is absolute torture to me—my ear is so sensitive, my every nerve is on edge."

So the musical-evenings plan faded into oblivion, and the Immaculate One made the acquaintance of a family struggling to get into society, where the daughters accompanied each other and the sons sang. For a time, he spent his evenings with them, and aired his criticisms on art generally, and believed himself to be regarded as an oracle. The daughters voted him a bore, and the sons voted him a prig, and the mother declared him to be a nuisance; but they put up with him because his first cousin was a baronet. Meanwhile, his little wife sat in her crowded, uncomfortable drawing-room, alone.

The Immaculate One possessed what he styled "an eye," which optic seemed to have the power to see simply one side, and that the disagreeable side, of everything. The day usually began in this wise:

My dear Muriel"—a pause, while he bestowed a peck on his wife's cheek —"you really must speak to Jemima; for the second time I have found a duster on my study-table." Or, "My dear Muriel, can you not see there is a finger-mark on that bracket? It is these little worries that try my nerves so terribly." And Muriel became nervous and unstrung; her eyes grew heavy and her pretty mouth took a sorrowful droop, and the devil, who happened not to have much to do just then, incited Jack Compton's sister to remark on the girl's altered looks in one of her letters to her brother; and Jack Compton came home.

"Shocking!" said the lady with the hat, being engaged in character-dissection of a friendly nature, over the teacups; "I feel so sorry, so unspeakably sorry for Mr. Lawrence Burton—such a charming man, so artistic, so refined, so——"

"And he bears it so beautifully, too," from a little woman in violet velvet, who had a love-letter in her muff from her husband's particular friend, and

was dying to get away and read it; "it must be so painful to know that every one is talking about her shame-

less conduct, you know."

"Mr. Compton married her as soon as the divorce was announced; that is one comfort," said the lady with the hat, sighing. The Expected Man had not fulfilled her expectations, and her thoughts were vaguely turning toward good works and an elderly vicar, who secretly loathed her. "Perhaps, Mr. Burton will marry again, poor man! How could she leave such a husband?"

"Well," remarked the hostess, one of those delightful old creatures who always call a spade a spade, and pride themselves upon the fact, "all I know is that, if I had been in Muriel's place, I should have left him long ago; disgusting prig, I call him."

"But he is so very refined and cultured," said her visitor, with a gasp.
"It is generally the wife's fault when these things happen; don't you think

so, dear?"

"Of course it is, dear, always," said the violet-velvet one; and she went away, to read her love-letter in peace.



AT TWILIGHT

WHEN twilight creeps upon thy life and mine, And on the margin of the sea we stand, Will some forgotten light gleam on the sand, Or some lost star in shadow faintly shine? Shall we find friendly beacons, or a sign To lead us safely to the unknown land That lies in far-off beauty, when my hand Slips softly for the last time into thine?

When twilight falls, and, hidden in our dust,
No rose of youth our dimming eyes discern,
When darkness comes upon us from above,
Shall we still have unstained our lifelong trust?
Dear God! Thy utmost lessons we will learn,
And not complain, if we may keep our love!

MYRTLE REED.



BENEVOLENT USE

16 THOSE automobile masks have a very commendable use, after all," remarked Fosdick.

"Go on," said Keedick.

"They hide the automobile face."



ONE WOMAN TO ANOTHER—How well you look! But, then, you look well in anything!

MUSIC AND MOONLIGHT

By Madison Cawein

M OON-ROSES, like a mist, Upon the terraced height, And 'mid the roses, opal, moonlight-kissed, A fountain falling white.

And as the full moon flows,
Orbed fire, into a cloud,
There is a fragrant sound, as if a rose
Had sighed its soul aloud.

There is a whisper pale,
As if a rose awoke,
And, having heard in sleep the nightingale,
Still dreaming of it, spoke.

Now, as from some vast shell,
A mighty pearl rolls white;
From the unclosing cloud, that winds compel,
The moon sweeps, big and bright.

Moon-mists and pale perfumes,
Breeze-borne, along the dusk;
There is a sound, as if unfolding blooms
Voiced their sweet thoughts in musk.

A spirit is abroad,
Of music and of sleep;
The moon and stars have made for it a road
Adown the glimmering deep.

It breathes a tale to me,
A tale of ancient day;
And, at its word, again I seem to see
Those towers old and gray;

That castle by the foam,
Where once our hearts made moan;
And through the night again you seem to come
Down statued stairs of stone.

Again I feel your hair,
Dark, fragrant, deep and cool;
You lift your face up, pale with its despair,
And wildly beautiful.

Again your form I strain,
Again, unto my heart;
Again your lips, again and yet again,
I kiss—and then we part!

As centuries ago
We did in Camelot;
Where once we lived that life of bliss and woe,
That you remember not;

When you were Guinevere
And I was Launcelot . . .
I have remembered many and many a year,
And you—you have forgot!



SONG OF THE SEA

THE Occultist
And the Mesmerist,
The Metaphysical Mind Curist,
The Viculturist,
The Astrologist,
And the Esoteric Vibrationist,
The Phrenopathist,
The Hypnotist,
As well as the Psychic Scientist,
Don't comfort me
When I'm at sea,
And feel the old, familiar twist.



TWO OF A KIND

MADGE—It was a terrible old boat. The vibration almost shook the breath out of you, the smell of the kerosene lamps was awful, and all the time we were afraid of being blown up.

MARJORIE—It must have felt just like riding in an auto.



HOME IS BEST

SHE—You didn't stay long in London.

HE—No, I couldn't stand it. Over there, everybody knew me for an American right away. Here, in New York, no one ever suspects it.



THE CAT AND THE COIN

By John Regnault Ellyson

OME evenings ago a guest at an up-town house in Andova, having passed out of the drawingroom, while yet near the unclosed door in the hall, putting on his gloves, overheard by chance some comments, which, after a pause, he very thoughtfully tabulated, in order that he might do full justice to all concerned.

"Was that, madame, a sigh of relief?" "I am not awfully sorry he's gone."

"He's a good fellow."

"Could any one be quite so homely?"

"Certainly, he's good enough, but homely and sometimes very tedious.' "Yet very amiable, I must say."

"If he had tact and more fancy," observed an elderly lady, "he would really be charming."

"Why, he has positively no imagination whatever," a gentleman remarked.

"True, he never exaggerates—never colors a subject. I have rarely known a person to be so matter-of-fact.

'And how odd," said another, "how odd it is that he has such inordinate curiosity."

"He interrogates rather than converses."

"Don't you think he would make an excellent interviewer?"

"Oh, no," answered the old lady who had already spoken; "no, he's much too modest."

The guest, so described, was none other than myself, and I relate what was said by way of showing you how I am regarded in the social world. Since my courteous friends, with whom I had left my character, mentioned no further particulars, it may not be improper to add that I have quiet manners and a fair notion of form, a reasonable income and some taste; that I appreciate beauty in women and the charms of landscape; that, instead of dipping into costume romances, I go about in search of living chroniclesthe piquant histories to be found in the human face; that, when occasion allows, I tranquilly enjoy good wine

and good fellowship.

But I admit, because it would be foolish to deny, that curiosity is my passion. Social life, art, beauty and good wine—I abandon these fine things the moment some word or trick or incident strikes the sympathetic chord, to which my whole nature responds. All effort at getting the better of this inquisitive interest ends by rendering me more eager to discover or clear up what seems in any way unusual or mysterious, and, consequently, though not a merchant, nor a member of any profession nor a politician, I have been sufficiently well, if unwisely, employed. My jolly companions have played upon my unfortunate temperament, thrown enticing objects in my path, got me into all kind of scrapes, and laughed at me. I have become more shy, but, if anything, more curious. I have long ago ceased talking of my little exploits, in which I have not always figured gracefully, but I see no especial reason why I should not note down for you, my unknown friend, at least a single recent instance in point.

Early one day last June, I was halting in front of a new shop in Gilmer street, when a man approached, coming from the opposite direction. was a big chap, with an intelligent ex-

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pression and a bronzed face, handsome despite the stubble of a few days' growth on the cheeks. Dressed roughly, his coat on his arm and the bottom of his trousers in his muddy boots, he had the lounging, loose gait and the general air of a countryman. habit oft proclaims the man, I know, but it also admirably conceals him, at times; the carriage of this one's head and the extreme regularity of his features vaguely suggested a milord in rustic disguise. I looked quickly at his hands; they were those of a true provincial. In the next moment, exchanging glances and nodding, as is the fashion on the road, he walked into the shop, and I saw, as he turned, that he had lost his left ear.

You imagine there is nothing extraordinary in that, and so would almost any one else; but I can assure you that you are wrong. An individual so marked is not confronted at every corner. It is common to see an old man with some teeth out, or a young man without much hair on the top of his head; you frequently meet a man with a missing arm or leg, or a man without an eye; but seek among your acquaintances, observe those you pass in the street, go further, and even travel about a little, and you will find that a man with an ear gone is quite a rarity.

My interest in the person was immediately aroused. To give the countryman time to make his purchase, I strolled down the street and back again, waited a while outside and then entered the shop. Several customers were there, but my man had procured what he wished and sallied forth unobserved.

You will understand why, three days after, on the Lampling Road, across the river from Andova, I felt a certain pleasure in encountering the very same person, under circumstances which resulted in an acquaintance. The wheel of his wagon had caught in a deep rut, and there was the danger of a capsize. I hastened to his assistance, and together we soon set things right. The fellow was cleanly shaved now and trimmer in his attire, but he was just

a trifle tipsy. Besides thanking me for the favor rendered, he offered a drink out of a small, black jug under the seat-board. To keep on friendly terms with him, I wet my lips, and, while he, in his turn, embraced the jug lovingly, I fancied I should secure, without much trouble, the history of the missing ear.

"No common stuff," said he, as he

replaced the cork.

"Rather like Squire Torpey's, in Linnwood."

"That's where I got it."

"I know the squire; he always has the best."

"Going up the road?" he asked.
"Yes, I am stretching my legs."
"Well, I'll foot along a bit myself."

So saying, he passed a little ahead of his team, stroked the nose of the sorrel jade, and clucked at her mate. Both followed us at an even pace, and he let his tongue wag, as we sauntered forward on the broad road, between the green hedges.

"I'm gone," said he, "for a week, up to Surry. You've been there? That's a place for trade. Live people—quick sales. Byrd says, 'Home's a fine nest and Surry's far off.' 'Yes,' says I, 'but I know where money doubles.' Byrd's my wife, and a bird she is—sings like a mocker. She's pretty enough, too; but ruffle her feathers, and there's mischief!" he added, laughing.

"With pretty girls," said I, aiming at my mark, "we get our hearts shaken up, if we don't lose our heads."

"There you're right, friend; you can't tell how nigh I come to losing mine. Ever hear of Tom Hatch?"

"I don't think I have."

"He's Byrd's dad. He keeps a big farm on the off-side of Linnwood. I lived there ever since a chick of a thing. When I grew up, you see, I was smart at figuring, bought and sold for the farm, had an eye on the hands, and put accounts in the book along with Byrd."

"And alone with her?" I asked,

smiling.

"Yes. And we brushed cheeks often.

Hatch believed nobody was like me, till he found she liked me better."

"So he caught you making love?"

"He walked in one day, and you'd have thought a gale had hit the house. But Byrd—she didn't budge. He had ruffed up her feathers, and she gave him a piece of her mind."

"And how did it end?" I asked, glancing at the left side of his head.

"Not as you reckon, perhaps. He flurried around and fetched his gun. It took no time—all in a wink. Byrd was game. She squared herself in front of me; but, quick as a hare, I turned and set myself 'twixt her and the muzzle. As the gun went off, somebody coming in jostled the old man's arm; the priest——"

And here, like one aware of having already said too much, he stopped, provokingly, leaving the sentence unfinished. For a moment, he scratched at his sleeve, and looked very foolish. I, with the keenest desire to know more, begged him to go on; but all I could get from him on that point was the drawled protest:

"I don't meddle with women and

priests.''

Soon, however, as if nothing in the least unusual had happened, he began talking on other subjects and continued in the same free strain. To a great deal of what he said, I paid slight heed, being interested only in the story I had heard in part, which, for some reason, it was clearly not his privilege to relate.

Now, before we parted, two miles further on, at the forks of the road, I had, of course, ascertained his name and where he lived, and on my way home formed a neat little plan, the idea of which extremely pleased me.

In a word, I determined to have a chat with his wife. So, in the cool of the next evening, I went across the river once again, and had no trouble in finding the fourth house on the Lampling Road, going west from Linnwood. In a group of oaks, the house with its pointed roof had for background a rolling space of well-sown fields. I opened the gate, and passed up the path,

frightening a couple of cats at play in the shrubbery, and rousing the dog on the porch. The barking of the dog brought forward the woman of the house, whom I saluted and asked about some unimproved neighboring land, that I understood was for sale. While I questioned and she replied, I took a mental picture of the wife. She was small and active, dark, yet pretty; she had a pleasant, air a good-humored face and shapely hands. I observed, too—and this impressed me as much as anything else—that two joints of the forefinger were missing from her right hand.

She answered my question, and I was ready with many others, asking, finally, who owned the farm she occupied. It once belonged to Mr. Hatch; she was his daughter; no, she had not inherited the property, for her father was still alive; her husband had purchased the place a few years back, and she mentioned her husband's name. I raised my eyebrows, and feigned surprise. I told her that I knew him, having met him by chance on two occasions. "And both times," I added, in my quiet manner of making an unexpected remark, "both times, do you know, I greatly wondered how he had lost his ear."

Her features clouded and then brightened with a smile.

"And didn't he tell you?" she asked.

"I never inquired."

"And he'd had no business telling you, anyhow."

"Pray, why?"

"Because that's Father Dekker's affair."

"The priest, madame," said I, pointedly; "and how did the priest come in?"

"Oh, you must ask the good man himself. Nobody can tell a story as he does. He's building a new chapel, and he tells his story and gets money that way."

"Then it's a story worth knowing?"

"That's what they all say."

"And where does the priest live?"

"Just inside Linnwood. You know the church with the gilt cross? His home's over the way—the house with the yellow blinds. Everybody goes there, now and then. He's a merry, plain man. Sometimes, when he preaches, he makes us laugh. He's precious queer and hard at a bargain, they say, and he earns his bread beside, which is as much as most of us do."

Thus, having begun, she spoke prettily and discreetly of the priest's foibles and virtues, giving me a very fair notion of his manners and looks; "gentle as an old mother, droll and roundish, riding about on his little donkey, and tipping you a jolly smile that's more than a blessing."

I had twice, as you perceive, failed to learn exactly what I wished, and yet there was no doubt in my mind as to where I was going, at the moment when I paid my parting compliments to the wife of Colly Barns.

Twilight was deepening when I reached the scenic nutshell of a cottage, the brown house with yellow blinds. And there, for a moment, I hesitated at the gate, saying to myself: "But why, after all, should I steal in now between the lights? Is it quite fair, and may it not be unfavorable to me? He's a jolly comrade, it is said, but he is also a priest, and a priest cannot forever be jolly. He has his cares, demands upon him hour by hour, numberless offices and devotions to perform; and, in the evening, wearied, perhaps, he seeks and needs repose. No, I'll come to-morrow, in the sunshine of the morning," I said, and passed the house; but, instantly, I turned back, remembering—I scarcely know how it chanced—the variant of a proverb, which a humorsome divine once gave in a sermon I heard: "An occasion at hand is worth two in the future." I mention this especially, because it is the only part of any sermon I ever recalled at the right moment, and acted upon wisely.

I followed the path, and mounted the steps. The drowsy-looking lad who answered the bell ushered me directly into the priest's study. One small lamp was already lighted, and Father Dekker, who was trimming the wick of the second lamp, looked up pleasantly, quit his task, and immediately came toward me.

At my very first glance, I saw that the priest was a much more interesting person than either Colly Barns or his comely wife, and I saw, too, that he lacked an eye. On the turn of sixty, chubby as a great child, almost as broad as long, with a waddling gait, a jovial countenance and simple manners, Father Dekker was just the man I wished to see. I felt so fraternal a feeling for him that I well-nigh embraced the good old gentleman. He held my hand warmly, examined my face closely, and seemed none the less pleased with me. I told him my name, and it brought to his mind a young officer, who had died on one of the battlefields of 1862.

"He was my uncle, I dare say."

"Indeed, yes; I can now see the family likeness. He was of those who fell nobly."

The priest sat down by my side, after finding me a comfortable seat, and related many agreeable episodes of my uncle's life in the camp and the field, many of his jests and tales, and many of his daring escapades. I was struck with Father Dekker's excellent memory and his happy whim of carrying his hearer with him, of vitalizing the picture he described. He was still talking of my uncle, when the drowsy lad came in and drawled out something I did not eatch.

"Oh, yes, yes," said the priest, in reply to the lad's question, "bring in your coffee and crackers, and we will sup right here. You shall see," he added, as the boy went out, "you shall see, my friend, what fine coffee a brat can make, who knows the taste of nothing but milk. A little stupid, a little slow, but he's always within call; a nice hand and home-loving, and that's what I like in him."

The table, placed between us, was soon spread, without any clatter. The inconsiderable repast consisted of crisp, brown wafers, savory, pickled lamb's

tongue and coffee. After the simple meal, we had a bottle of very pure wine and some excellent cigars.

Smiling and as familiar as two old school-fellows, we sipped and smoked and chatted. When a chance presented, I made bold and confessed my mission, or a part of it—that is to say, the desire of meeting the genial priest and of contributing to his new chapel fund. I put in his palm, in fact, all I had about me—a trifling sum in He was cordially grateful, spoke of the necessity of a new chapel, the style in which it should be built, how much money was now in hand and how much was yet needed. These and a hundred kindred matters he talked of, and at every moment I fancied I was going to hear the bit of anticipated history. Though more than two hours elapsed and no hint of it escaped him, I knew perfectly well the story would come. Ample time there was for that, and, so far as I was concerned, no reason to hurry; he and I might prattle, indeed, until And, besides, the priest was really so droll, so alert, so full of crotchets and fine waggery that I could have remained with him, I thought, for some days, without becoming in the least wearied.

But, ever and again, as my passion warmed and awakened, I sought means of shifting the gossip where I wished, and so making a climax for the evening. I frequently led him to the very subject, but he eluded me and alighted at a different point. It was exceedingly amusing, as if playing a game that never ended. I chose to ignore the true object I had at heart, and this, likewise, he chose to ignore. The ingenious and amiable father, with rare humor, wavered, approached and hesitated, drew back and turned around; he dallied like a girl with her lover, hung his shaggy head, quaintly, like a big flower, chirped like a sparrow, babbled like a little stream among the rocks, and did everything except step into his castle of Spain, and fling open its doors for the pleasure of his guest.

And time went on. He grew more

jocular and diverting. He told me how he lost his flesh once, and how he gained double the amount of it; how he lost his great taste for garlic; how he lost his rosary in the woods one day, and how he found it on the roadside before sundown; how he lost his dog on a dark night, and how it discovered the footpad lying in wait to rob him; how he lost his balance on the brink of a walled spring; how he lost his purse thrice in an hour, and how, in another hour, he lost thrice the value of the purse.

"But how," said I, at last, hearing so much of losses, "how, my good friend—tell me, how you lost your eye?"

"Ha! ha!" shouted the priest, shaking his sides.

"Is it so comical?" I demanded.

"Comical?" he echoed. "Well, well! of that you must be the judge. It's my story of 'The Cat and the Coin'—the story with which I am building my new chapel."

"Why, how extremely odd!" I

cried.

"Is it so odd-money got in this way?—something given for something received? Isn't it honest—a good tale for a neat sum? Isn't it quite fair both parties being pleased? Doesn't it kindle two most natural emotionsthe pleasure of giving and the pleasure of receiving? There was a time when the church lived by begging, or by the bequests of old sinners; to-day we have, besides, our fairs, our excursions, our concerts, to which nobody We get money, also, from objects. corn and wine and oil, or from the dealers therein, and the money may have come crookedly, but nobody says 'Money is money,' said I to the bishop, who didn't at first think well of my plan, 'and money is what I need. You know, all is as one in the church plate,' I added; 'the dime of the maid and the dollar of the harlot, the dirty bill of the banker and the bright guinea of the gambler.' 'There!' said the bishop, 'there! go on with your story.' "

"Yes, dear friend," said I, laughing, "do go on with your story, I pray."

As the words fell from my lips, there came the sound of soft shuffling on the floor. We turned. It was the drowsy lad, who had entered the room, moving toward us.

"Father, there's a man at the door,"

said he; "somebody's dying."

"Some one is dying?" murmured the priest, in low, sweet tones, as he crossed himself, "God rest his soul! And who is he, my child?"

"The man says his name is Hatch."
"Tom Hatch! He sends for me?
In all conscience, this is truly very strange, indeed!" And off he went, to

speak with the messenger.

The lad lingered behind, near the table on one side of the room. I looked at the grotesque shadow he cast, at the crucifix above the shadowy head, and at the clock still higher on the wall. I gave a slight start—the hours had passed so swiftly; it was twelve by the timepiece. I felt ashamed of myself for prolonging my visit. I rose, and, when, a moment or so later, the priest returned, I began to apologize.

"No, no; not a word on that score," said he, pressing me tenderly back in my chair. He told the lad to saddle the donkey, and then turned

to me.

"The evening has been delightful," he said, "and I only regret the interruption. I may not be absent long; I beg you to stay here—to spend the night, if you can put up with the small comfort of a priest's bed, and I shall be glad if you don't refuse. I am going," he added, "on a mission I don't fancy. I know this man Hatch, and I have known him under very peculiar circumstances. His is a strong character and a bad one. Hot, headlong, vindictive, he has ugly moods: yet he's better educated than most individuals of his class, and has a really shrewd mother-wit. Early in his life he imbibed the doctrines of Tom Paine, and improved on them, as he says. Even at this critical moment, he sends me word that he wishes none of my offices, that he merely wishes me. I have tried too often to sway him; he can't be moved. As a priest, there's

nothing to be done; merely as a man, I may do some good. Now, make yourself at home; amuse yourself, and, if I am delayed, my lad will show you into my room and render you as comfortable as possible. In the morning, we'll breakfast together, and we'll have my famous little story."

Excusing himself, then, he exchanged his slippers for his laced shoes, his cassock for his coat, tucking carefully a silk handkerchief about his throat, drew on his big hat over his shaggy hair, and was soon gone forth on the mission, which proved to be much more singular and painful than

he imagined.

I undertook to amuse myself, but it was rather a serious matter. The life of the house went out when the priest went. I sat in his easy-chair, leather-covered and cool, and sipped his wine and smoked his cigars. I waited and I dozed. At the end of two hours, as he was still absent, I rang for the servant, and confessed that I could scarcely keep my eyes open.

No man of the world, it is said, rests well in a priest's bed. I do not know whether it is presumed that the bed is usually too hard, or that conscience there troubles the repose of the ungodly; but I freely avow that I did not sleep much, for altogether another

reason.

The chamber was of fair size and airy and trimly furnished. There were two beds, at opposite angles of the The drowsy servant was obliging, but extremely sluggish. Part of the time, he seemed half asleep. He roused himself when I spoke, and stirred around, after his fashion, and then again fell into a stupid, listless state. I found myself watching him; I cannot say why. He stepped softly, moved slowly. He had an animal's way of rubbing against things, and his voice was a kind of purr. I could not guess his age; he was young, and yet he was wrinkled. He had very round eyes, hair running to within an inch of his brows, long ears peaked into a needle's point, a decidedly sharp chin, the flat nose of the feline tribe, and cattish whiskers at the edges of his mouth. When I turned my face from him, I could see him still.

After this napping creature had done his service and answered twenty questions or more, he retired into the adjoining room—the priest's study where he curled himself on the rug. Soon he was deep in slumber; I could hear his measured breathing. I lowered the light and put off my clothes, lay down and dozed; but, at every other moment, I awoke. The bed was comfortable; and a fresh, light wind came in through the open casement. I was drowsy, but each time I dozed the lad seemed to be moving about the room, here or there, around the bed or in some corner; yet, each time I wakened. I saw him in the same position, lying curled up on the rug. It was, of course, very foolish, very absurd. The lad's features had simply fixed themselves on my retina, and the capricious action of some set of nerve-cells kept them flitting.

At last, I fell asleep in good earnest. I could not have slept long, and I was roused in the most startling conceivable manner. I heard a series of hoarse, harsh cries, wild and unhallowed sounds, neither natural nor human—sounds that seemed to rise from the foot of the bed. I have experienced, in my life, many emotions, but I think I was never so perfectly unstrung, so really alarmed. Such was my sense of confusion and horror that I found myself incapable of moving; I lay stricken on my back, my eyes set and my jaw hanging.

I could see nothing immediately around or near me; but I could see into the next room. The lad—but where was he? He was nowhere visible, and nobody else was in the line of my vision. There were footsteps, however, in the hall and in the study—some one's firm tread and some one's slow gait.

I uttered a low cry; the priest appeared at the door.

"Ah, my young friend, are you awake?"

I could not reply.

"Bring me a light, my child," said he, coming forward, quickly.

The servant brought the lamp, and

stood by my side.

"Bless my soul, what's happened?" cried the priest, observing the startled look in my eyes and my lips wide apart. "Good Mother in heaven! What, are you ill?"

By this time, I had, in a measure, recovered from my bewilderment, but speech hung in my throat. It was impossible to articulate; my lower jaw, as if it had received a heavy blow, seemed stiffened or paralyzed. However, I could wag my tongue, nod my head, move my hands, lift my legs.

I hastily shook my head, therefore, in reply to the priest's question, and sought to explain by signs. I closed my eyes, indicating that I had been asleep; I touched my ears and made a guttural noise, in witness of what I had

heard.

The pantomime was intelligible, but Father Dekker appeared to be perplexed as to the nature of my injury. He looked from me to the lad, who held the lamp, and, obtaining no satisfaction from the fellow's blank countenance, he bent down again, fingered me tenderly, examined me attentively, and soon discovered the character of the mishap.

My jaw was dislocated.

For the next few minutes, he was as busy as could be, gentle as a woman, composed as a surgeon, reassuring and tactful; he went through a simple yet painful process, setting the jaw in place, and, afterward, binding a bandage under my chin and over my head, as though he had been doing the same thing every day in his life.

"An unhappy accident, but not at all serious," said he, in concluding the task. "You will laugh over it tomorrow. Don't attempt to talk—no, sip a little wine through your teeth now; 'twill invigorate and revive you. I understand—some noise or other wakened you suddenly out of a deep sleep, startled you, and you opened your mouth just a bit too wide. It's nothing; I have twice had the same

accident myself, and both times it occurred while snoring."

Then, turning to the servant, he asked:

"What noises or sounds did my

young comrade hear?"

"Noises? sounds?" drawled the lad; "I heard nothing—nothing but the braying of your donkey, as he

passed the window."

Moving aside to hide his smiles, the amiable priest dismissed the servant, came and sat by the bed, chatting in his soothing, pleasant manner. He rose after a while, put off his clothes, knelt for some moments at the back of a chair, got up again, lowered the lamp, showed me the threads of sunlight through the closed blinds, and then drew down the shade.

"Now, let's take a little snooze," said he, stretching himself in the bed at the opposite corner of the room.

We breakfasted at noon.

Thanks to the priest's promptness and skill, I was not much inconvenienced by my ridiculous accident. The muscles were yet somewhat sensitive, but the bandage had been cast by. I could chat; I could eat, though with difficulty. I expected my curiosity to be gratified, and I confess I was not disappointed. I had from the old gentleman, indeed, such facts as I presume he never again related.

At the table, I observed more than once that Father Dekker was not exactly himself, by no means the jolly soul of the preceding evening. He did not prattle so carelessly, so delightfully. He ate little, and appeared to be very much absorbed. But, the meal over and the servant out of the way, the priest, leaning against the arm of his chair and putting his hand on that of mine, said:

"I don't know whether it is seemly or excusable to unveil a corner of life which God in His wisdom hides. I may be wrong in so doing, but I am determined to tell you what I heard and what I witnessed, while away from home last night—things so incredible that I can hardly believe

them now, sitting with you here in the clear light of this beautiful day. I shall give the outlines and only such details as are needed, and I shall spare you any comment upon them.

"When I arrived at Hatch's, the scullion led me up-stairs into the old man's chamber, where he lay, haggard and worn, propped up among his pillows. He hadn't mixed with people for several years; he had no confidential associates. The three persons standing near his bed—a lawyer of Linnwood, whom I knew, and two of my own neighbors—were there for a purpose. In fact, Hatch held in his hand a will, which had been signed and attested. As I entered, and before I could salute any one, he asked those present to retire below-stairs; then he beckoned to me.

"'I bring you here,' said he, 'not as a priest, but as a man and in your own interest rather than mine. Here is my will; I place it now in your keeping. I have done what will surprise the world and may surprise you; I have made you my sole heir, on the condition merely that my flesh and kin shall in no wise be benefited by what I leave.'

"I took the document, which I didn't read, tore it into four parts, folded the pieces, and held them over the flame of the lamp until the slips were consumed.

"'See! You've got your nails burnt for your trouble!' he exclaimed, and seemed malignantly to relish the notion.

"'Your lawyer is here,' said I, 'and your attestators. I shall call them. You are too clear-headed a man, Tom Hatch, not to make a sensible will.'

"'Stop! Stay where you are!' he cried. 'Let it rest!' And he added: 'Now, since you don't desire to be regarded as a man, I'll address you as a priest.'

"'That is as it should be,' I an-

"His brows contracted; he coughed. His voice, when he spoke, was thick and husky.

"'My hours are numbered. You see my condition. Do you respect the

wishes of a wretch on the grave's brink?'

"'Ask what you will-

"'I beg that you remain here until I am dead.

"'If this is your desire-

"'But promise on your honor, by your faith in the Cross-

"'I promise,' I said.

"'Well, go there, lock the door, fetch the key; then come and sit down

at my side.

"I did as he requested, and took a chair at the edge of the bed. The key, which he seized, he hid within the folds of his gown, somewhere under the light coverlet. He looked up and

laughed.

"'I have you now, sir priest, and I have you just where I want you caught in the trap like an old rat. You are mine. No need of any apprehensions! See, I can do you no bodily harm. You know me; you know I don't forgive. You wouldn't become the tool of revenge, my honest rogue, but you'll not forget your insolence the rest of your days. Ah, sit down! I am going to show you how one can die in the presence of a priest and without his aid; how one with blood on his hands can confess and still refuse absolution; and how one can commit a crime right under your nose, and yet not be discovered. There! ease your fat flanks; sit down, I say! Remember your promise, and I'll remember my share of the bargain!

"He looked at me a long while, in

silence, and then resumed:

"'You've been in these parts about twelve years, I think, feeding your flock of geese and picking their feathers. Some half-score years before, when my wife died, I came into this land's end. Besides the tot, my daughter, whom I curse and don't count, I had in the family my sister and her husband—that is, a man and a woman and one who was neither. This person, in fact, was a born eunuch, and better it is to hive with bees or nest with lizards than to have pinned to your sleeve a creature of the sort, restless always, busy in mischief, nettling and

caressing by turns. It's well enough to speak of him as my brother. was not so old as I, slim and no taller than my sister, with dark skin wrinkled like bark, a head covered with sorrel ringlets, brows in a peak, white little jagged teeth from which the lips went back like a fise's, and round, yellowish

eyes splashed like a cat's.

"'They called him Polly-he seemed so droll! He dressed in male attire, but he wore ear-drops and bands on his fingers. He was vain of his hands, and they, like his tongue, were ever in motion. He chattered incessantly and talked to himself when none else was by. But he didn't mix much with strangers, or go far. He hung by those he knew. You could flatter him, and he, too. could flatter you. No one was more free with pet terms. Often, I don't know why, he called me "Chicky," and every time he did my blood mounted. He tickled or stung, and yet you couldn't shake him off; if you threatened, he feigned and shivered and all that, but he feared nothing. My sister, who was rather devout, said that Polly would dare make faces at St. Michael and his sword. Very demure at times, it was then wise to heed him narrowly-his tricks began. He lied, and you believed his lies. He stole and left no clue. There was no good to be got out of him. He never worked as a man works. cooked, sewed, cleaned the house, milked the cows, if he chose; but, mostly, he idled his time in planting slips and trimming vines, digging worms for birds and keeping the pigeons and his cats apart. All in all, he was very absurd; he had a little dance movement in walking, and he spoke in a thin, soft voice, with a sing-song twitter. Over and again, in the early days, I wondered what he was made for, and I have since learned.

"'Now, I came here with money, bought land, pushed my aims, strove hard and thrived; though I had troubles, large and small. There was my sister's husband, for instance, who drank. If ever I saw a monkey in

liquor, it was he—an idiot and a pest in one; yet, sometimes, at long intervals he was sober. Again, there was my sister—a practical girl, except as regarded her mate and Polly's pets. She doted on the monkey and abhorred the cats. The scenes grew worse day by day, and, finally, I settled Polly to himself, on a place called Point-Roof.

"'Then occurred the death of my sister, at the birth of her boy—two misfortunes, you observe. I buried her, of course, in your Christian fashion, decently. There followed a bad phase of an old annoyance; my sister's husband, after his wife died, was drunk for one whole year. He needed rest. It was fitting, I thought, that he should be drowned. The body never came to light, because the well in which he stumbled was filled and

never opened.

"'However, this didn't bring my vexations to a close. The creature at Point-Roof, somehow, discovered the affair of the well, and I paid dearly for his silence, in hard coin. Sly, audacious, every inch a knave, he wooed me as only he could, cringed at my heels, cajoled and duped me. He had a miser's lust, a fiend's cunning. He fleeced and robbed me, and hid away the gold I reluctantly yielded. He even kindled my own thirst for gain, fanned my hopes, persuaded me that he possessed secrets worth getting, and thus saved himself for years.

"'But I couldn't be eternally hooded and duped—I couldn't be eternally plundered. So, one night, I went to the house at Point-Roof, where I had never gone. You should have seen his room! I have seen it every night in my sleep since then. It was small, clean as a new broom, and cool as a nook in the It was all green and blue and woods. He had colored the walls with indigo-wash, and it was sprucely done. He had sand-rubbed the floor, until it was smoother than a planed board. The bed in one corner looked as if spread by a girl—as bright as the white-caps" in the moonshine outside. Some things I had missed from

home were here—the brass poles over the windows, the lace curtains, patched and stiff with starch, and the little bureau, with glass knobs, that had belonged to my mother. The shelf of the mantel, raised into two steps, was filled with ornaments—things, also, I had missed—bits and jars, a lamp of my father's, an old gilt snuff-box of mine, candlesticks and flowers in pots. Save for the jars and the snuff-box, you would have said, perhaps, that it resembled an altar. Beside the table, near the wall, were two willow chairs.

"'I sat in one of these; he sat in the other, sly and fawning. He patted his foot softly, played with his hands, and spoke in his humming, low tone, somewhat between a prattle and a croon—spoke of his petty concerns, the well that had gone dry, the cat that had died, and the strange hawk that he had trapped. I listened a while, and then, bestirring myself, told him he had better at once give up the secrets he boasted of, and make his peace with his Maker, if he cared, as I intended helping him, by the devil's grace, into heaven that night.

"'But he showed no alarm. He laughed and shook the rings in his ears, chirping in his kind of sing-song.

"'"Very well, Chicky," said he; "I know what's coming. I am yours, and I'll tell you. It goes far back and it runs down near, but I'll tell vou all you wish—all you wish, and more. One day it happened, when I was young, an old, old dame came to my mother's, and gave me a little black kitten. I kissed her and thanked her, and she caught me in her arms, set me on her knee, fondled my hair, and called me pretty names. Then she whispered something in my ear. said there were strange times coming. But I must wait, she said, wait for the new land—I must love what grows and creeps and moans, she said, and cling to my brother. When he put me by. I must watch him and watch him, for there were strange times com-One would die, and one be born, and one go missing. I must

watch you, Chicky, she said, and watch the well. And she told me there was gold to be got, and how; and how I could stay your hand for a long while, and how my end would come, and yours."

""And how shall my days end?" I

asked.

""Why, with a crime, under the priest's nose, at the second crowing of the cock—in the strange times that are coming," said he; and ceased, for something glittered at his throat.

"'I twisted the blade, and the farce was done. I searched then for the hidden coin; searched the house inside and outside, searched along the boards and shelves and under stones, in all places and all corners, down-stairs and above, but nowhere could the gold be found.

"'Did you hear, sir priest, a sound in the air?'

"'I heard a cock crow,' I answered.
"The early bird catches the worm,'
he muttered, and hoarsely chuckled.

"I should have turned away," added the priest, "but his voice had now grown thick and faint. He spoke no more. Shadows were passing across his face, and wild lights flickered in his eyes. There was a momentary swaying of the body. The arms were lifted, the coverlet thrown down, and I saw the knife, with which an artery had been opened, and the red dew of blood.

"There are times when one cannot move—when one cannot pray. I know not why I listened so eagerly for his last breath, nor by what sorcery it was that I heard merely the second crowing of the cock."

As the priest ceased speaking, he swept his hand over his brow, as if wiping away some vision that hung there. It was easy to see that he still shuddered.

But the prim, bright room in which we sat, the fresh, sweet air, the rare beauty of the day, the tender, serene glimpses of the sky between the trees, the fluttering of the leaves and the birds in the neighboring

garden, made me gradually realize that there are idyllic charms in life and sunny levels, as well as somber dreams and deeps.

After some moments' pause, I ventured a remark.

"And the other story, father," said I, "is that pleasing and gay?"

"Ah, I fear," said the old confessor, with a sigh, "I fear I shall never have heart to tell my story again—as it must be told to pass as 'pleasing and gay'—as I have told it so often. No, impossible! I think I could not. But I'll relate what may, perhaps, interest you more—the simple facts on which I builded my little story, and which in a way complete the dark tale that has shadowed mine.

"Hatch reared his nephew roughly and concealed his kinship, but he brought out the boy's sturdier qualities. I am not sure he wasn't as proud of him, at times, as of his daughter. Both were of the type he cared for—spirited and vigorous, industrious and clever. Thrown together latterly with more freedom, they grew to love each other, as young ones will, and screened instinctively this affair of their hearts. But Hatch, as you find the old ones always doing, discovered the attachment. He made a terrible scene. When I stepped in, drawn from the road by the noise of high words, he was aiming his gun at the boy's head. I touched his arm; he missed his aim, and the lad didn't receive so much as a scratch."

"And his ear?" I asked.

"No, no," said the priest, "no, he didn't lose his ear on that occasion. I read them all a caustic lecture, and afterward, as I thought, effected a reconciliation. But, the morning following, Hatch again showed his choler, and the lovers ran off and married.

"Some time before," continued the priest, "Colly had purchased with his savings a little farm—the place called Point-Roof—and there they settled. All would have gone on merrily, but for the girl's odd fancy. She loved cats, and had nursed this

fancy secretly at her father's. The pretty animal she had hitherto kept in her chamber, going at large now in the new quarters, mated and multiplied. There were many in the first brood, and a bevy of visitors. Colly, whose antipathy to the cat tribe was marked, soon displayed his humor, and adopted high-handed measures, which resulted in numerous little storms. One day, being, unhappily, in his cups, he attempted to get into the house and slay a newborn litter of kittens, but the plucky girl, quick and strong, slammed the door and Colly's ear paid the penalty. By one of those accidents deemed inconceivable until they occur, the ear was caught between the edge of the door and the jamb, and the doctor who was sent for prudently clipped off what was left.'

'And this—did this cool his ardor?"

I questioned.

"If it had cooled his ardor," he responded, smiling, "I shouldn't have lost my eye."

"Was it a case," I asked, playfully, "in which one's loss proved an-

other's gain?"

"That's it, exactly! While his wife was preparing supper one evening, Colly amused himself by catching the cats and dropping them into the rain-barrel under the side window. One got out of his reach, mounted the shelf over the door, and he, eager and indiscreet, ran into the kitchen, and picked up his gun. The girl came softly after his heels, and, when he aimed at the cat on the shelf, she leaped forward suddenly and clutched at the muzzle. As it happened, she lost the first joints of her forefinger at the same instant that I, opening the door without knocking, lost my eye. For a moment or more there was a hubbuba sad confusion. But in a most incredibly short time, removed to the best bed in the house, I was being attended by two physicians from Linnwood and by one of the nursing Sisters of Mercy, brought from Andova.

"My active young friends, when they learned that my condition was not so bad as they supposed, went into that part of the house where the accident occurred, and, while there examining and setting things in shape, made a very surprising discovery which, with the other excitement of the evening, kept them night. The ball, wide-awake all which had rebounded and grazed my left eye, had first broken away the loosened jamb of the door, and the stuffed carcass of a cat had slipped out of the boarding of the wall; this, being roughly handled, burst, and from the dried cat's skin rolled a hatful of gold.

"The next morning, they came to me—two such dear, red-eyed, desolate creatures as you have never seen -knelt by the bedside and sobbed, telling me what they had found, and naïvely offering me the whole of the bright gold coin, that half-filled one of Byrd's brown stockings. They were tearful, sad, utterly inconsolable, until I began laughing. Despite myself, I was laughing at the storyas I thought it should run—and thinking how well it might serve the project I had in mind. And, accordingly, I struck a bargain with them. Here are the terms in brief: There should be no more wrangling at Point-Roof; in future, Byrd should have two pets, with which Colly should not tamper; if the pets multiplied, however, then his rights began; the treasure should be theirs and the story should be mine."

28

HELD UP

GLADYS—Did he get on his knees when he proposed to you? MARIE—No, I was already on them.

SANTA'S SOLILOQUY

By Aloysius Coll

I WONDER, now, which stocking she Will hang for me to fill!
I cannot choose my lady's gift
For Christmas morn, until
I learn just whether I shall leave
Her precious gift to lurk
Deep in a toe of glossy silk,
Or net of open-work.

It all depends on mesh and weave,
And style and stitch and thread—
The gift I leave my lady fair,
When she is snug in bed;
Some stockings stretch a mile or more—
A coach and four would fit;
While some would scarcely hold a grudge,
They are so tightly knit.

My lady has a pair as green
And silken as the sea;
But what their stretching power remains
A riddle unto me.
She has a pair that's black and long—
She wears them on the beach;
I wonder, will she hang them up?
I hope they're out of reach.

Her golfing plaids are strong and tight,
And wide and thick and stout;
But they are used so much that I'm
Afraid the toes are out!
That flimsy pair she wears to balls,
To match a gown of white—
I scarcely think she'll risk to hang
Them up on Christmas night.

Perhaps she'll buy a brand-new pair
For Christmas, or she'll hire
A pair of extra size to hang
Before the chimney fire.
In all my years I never was
In such perplexing plight—
What stockings will my lady fair
Hang up on Christmas night?

THE GREAT SECURITY BANK MYSTERY

WHEN the watchman of the Security National Bank wakened from his nap, which he was quite sure had not lasted more than three or four hours, he was astonished to find the door of the great vault lying on the floor. Never before, in the whole six months during which he had faithfully guarded the interests of the bank, had such an unheard-of thing happened, and something told him that he ought to notify somebody. So he went to the telephone, and rang up the president of the bank. The latter, though plainly annoyed by being disturbed at such an hour, praised the watchman for his zeal, and said he would give the matter his personal attention, as soon as he had made the necessary changes in his attire. Meanwhile, he asked the watchman to notify the police and also to request the cashier to appear at the bank as soon as possible.

The president and the cashier arrived on the scene, simultaneously. Entering the bank, they found a sergeant of police and two patrolmen, together with a gentleman in citizen's clothes, whom the sergeant introduced as Mr. Hoyle, adding, in an impressive stage-whisper: "Sure, ye've heard uv Showman Hoyle. He's over here on a visit, an' th' old man put him on this case, so he wudn't

fale lonesome wid nawthin' to do."

The great detective swept the room with a glance of his keen, gray eyes. One felt, instinctively, that nothing could escape this wonderful man. And nothing did. When he had seen enough to satisfy him, he spoke, quietly, but with an air of conviction. "There has been a robbery," was all he said.

The solution was simple; yet no one had thought of it before. With breathless interest, they waited to hear what he would say next. "The robber," continued Hoyle, "was evidently unfamiliar with the combination of the vault." Then, seeing the look of amazement on the faces of those present, he continued: "Otherwise, it would not have been necessary to use explosives."

After a glance into the open vault, the detective's face lighted up, with the joy of one who has made an important discovery. It was the first sign of emotion he had shown. "The burglar," he announced, confidently, "was a man

of less than medium height."

"But how-?" began the president.

"Very simple, indeed," interrupted the detective. "Do you not see that package of thousand-dollar bills on the top shelf? If the burglar had been tall enough, he would have reached them. Furthermore, he was not a professional cracksman, or he would have carried a step-ladder for use in just such emer-

gencies."

Paying no attention to the murmur of approval which greeted his wonderful exhibition of deductive analysis, Hoyle picked up his hat, and made as if to go. At the door, he paused and turned toward the three policemen who were looking at him in open-mouthed astonishment. "Well, sergeant," he said, sharply, "what are you waiting for? You have heard my description. Why don't you go out and find the man?"

ISAAC ANDERSON.

2

IT must be torturing to a prima donna to realize she has lost her voice, but it is much more torturing to her audience when she doesn't realize it.

LA FÊTE DE MA FEMME

Par Octave Pradels

UELLE journée je viens de passer!

C'est aujourd'hui la Sainte Angèle, la fête de ma femme.

Ce matin, je m'étais dit:

Quoi lui offrir? Un bouquet? c'est banal. Un bijou? il faut tout de suite y mettre le prix; c'est ennuyeux. C'est le moment des primeurs; si je lui offrais une magnifique botte d'asperges? D'autant plus que je les adore, moi, les asperges!"

Sitôt pensé, sitôt exécuté; je vais acheter tout ce qu'il y avait de mieux. Six francs la botte! Je remonte, et, avec le visage souriant d'un bon mari qui croit avoir rempli son devoir, j'entre dans la chambre de ma femme qui était en train de détortiller ses bigoudis.

Qui est-ce qui a fait une surprise à

sa Gégèle pour sa fête?''

"Vrai? oh! que tu es gentil!" me répond-elle, en cherchant à voir ce que je cachais derrière mon dos.

Je l'embrasse sur les deux joues et, radieux, je lui tends la botte d'asperges; mais Angèle fait un nez! oh! mais un de ces nez!

"C'est ça?"

"Oui; une vraie surprise, hein?"

"Et c'est tout?"

"Mais oui."

"Ah! vous ne vous ruinerez pas pour votre femme, vous!"

Quand Angèle me dit: "vous," c'est que ça se gâte; aussi je m'empresse de faire valoir mon cadeau:

"Mais, regarde donc comme elles sont belles! Six francs la botte! Je ne lésine pas, tu vois. Tiens! on peut les manger jusqu'au bout, et même au-delà!

Dec. 1902-97

Et j'appelle la bonne:

"Françoise, vous ferez cuire ces magnifiques asperges pour notre déjeuner; nous les mangerons à l'huile."

"Non," fait Angèle d'un ton sec, "à

la sauce blanche.

"Mais, pourtant—

"Oh! naturellement, vous cherchez à me contrarier!"

"Pas du tout, mais---"

"Oui, je vous comprends: vous espérez, en me forçant à boire du vinaigre, hâter le délabrement de ma poitrine."

"Angèle, je t'assure-

"Inutile! Vous ne m'habituerez pas à vos goûts communs. Oh! non!"

"Communs? Ah! mais---"

"Je n'en mangerai pas de vos asperges; je les déteste, et vous avec!" Ah! tu vas trop loin, tu sais!"

"Vous ne m'empêcherez pas de parler, je suppose!" de dire que vous n'êtes qu'un.

"N'achève pas!"

"Qu'un pleutre!" "Angèle!"

"C'est ca—insultez-moi, maintenant -pendant que vous y êtes! Battezmoi! Mais je ne me laisserai pas faire—et tenez!"

Et elle prend son chapeau, ouvre la

porte et se sauve en criant: "Vous ne me reverrez jamais!"

II

Je restai rouge de colère.

Mais, au bout de cinq minutes, la peur me prend. Je la connais; elle est très-vive, ma femme. Je descends dans la rue: je ne la vois pas. Je

cours. inquiet. J'arrive au Pont-Neuf.

l'aperçois un rassemblement.

Un pressentiment horrible m'étreint. Je vois un petit pâtissier qui portait sur la tête un plateau sur lequel était une bombe glacée. Je lui demande en tremblant:

"Qu'est-ce que c'est?"

"Ah! m'sieu, elle doit être noyée!"
"Son nom? Dis vite!"

"Je ne sais pas, moi; mais elle était rudement gentille!"

"Mon ami," lui dis-je, "informe-toi,

je t'en prie, tâche de savoir."

J'ai pas l'temps; vous voyez donc pas que j'porte l'dessert à des bour-

geois qu'est pressés?"

Je dégringole l'escalier qui mène au bord de l'eau. Je retirais déjà une manche de mon veston, mais heureusement je me rappelle que je ne sais faire que cinq brassées, et encore sur un fond de bois! Je remets donc ma manche, et je plonge-mes yeux dans l'eau de tous côtés.

Rien!

Je descends la Seine: rien!

J'arrive au pont des Invalides et je vois un rassemblement. Je repalpite. C'était un cheval qui s'était abattu. Je perds vingt minutes à le voir relever, et je continue à descendre le bord de l'eau. Enfin, j'arrive au Point-du-Jour.

Je me dis: "Je l'aurai dépassée!"

Je remonte.

Au pont de Grenelle, je vois un troisième rassemblement, et mon petit pâtissier qui n'avait plus que la moitié de sa bombe glacée; l'autre s'était fondue au soleil.

"Qu'est-ce que c'est?"

"Eh ben! on vient de la retirer d' l'eau.''

"Ah! parle vite: elle est—"

"Tiens! c'te bêtise! Elle est morte, parbleu!"

Je sens mes jambes qui flageolent; je défaille; mais un effort suprême de volonté me ranime, et je dis au petit pâtissier, dont la bombe fondait toujours:

"Mon ami, voici vingt francs, et ma

carte. Fais-la transporter à mon domicile. Je n'ai pas le courage de la regarder."

Et je me sauve comme un fou.

III

J'ARRIVE chez moi, en nage. Je sonne; la bonne m'ouvre.

Elle n'avait pas l'air navré, mais souvent les domestiques tiennent si peu à leurs maîtres!

Je me laisse choir sur une chaise;

la bonne me dit:

"Monsieur ne va pas auprès de madame?"

"Non; je n'ose pas, après ce qui s'est passé. Ah! la malheureuse!"

"Bah! Madame aura pardonné à monsieur."

"Tu crois, Françoise?"

"Dame! elle n'a pas l'air fâché."

"On l'a donc déjà rapportée?"

"Je ne sais pas, mais elle est dans la salle-à-manger."

"Allons! de l'énergie!" me dis-je. "Fais ton devoir. Va demander pardon à sa dépouille."

Frémissant, j'ouvre la porte de la salle-à-manger-et je vois ma femmeen train de manger les asperges et qui me dit:

"Eh bien! tu sais, elles sont excellentes, et je ne t'en veux plus!"

Je ne trouve rien à dire: j'étais

hypnotisé!

On sonne, et la bonne introduit le petit pâtissier dont la bombe était fondue et qui me présente le corps d'une chienne noyée.

Je comprends tout!

Alors, le bonheur m'étouffe! brasse la bonne et le petit pâtissier, à qui je donne vingt francs. tourne à ma femme, et je l'embrasse, fou de joie. Mais ma joie s'apaise en apercevant qu'Angèle vient d'ingurgiter la dernière asperge.

Et à la sauce blanche encore!

Avec tout ca, ma botte d'asperges m'a coûté quarante-six francs, et je n'en ai pas mangé!

Une autre fois, j'achèterai un bijou.

BEAUTY'S PASSING

By Marvin Dana

A KING of the olden day
Rode forth in royal state;
With all his train in fair array,
Rode out through the palace gate.

He fared to seek a bride,

A mate for his hand and throne,

A queen to make him his kingdom's pride,

A woman to make his own.

"God-speed!" a maiden smiled,
"God-speed thy queen to bring!"
It was the keeper's lovely child,
Her beauty thrilled the king.

"Fair is the keeper's maid,
And fairer shall she be,
That princess," thus the monarch said,
"Who is to wed with me."

The king rode north and west,
To east and south he sped;
To many a court he took his quest,
But he found no queen to wed.

The maidens of royal state
Could never a one compare
With that peasant lass at the keeper's gate,
So simple, so sweet, so fair.

A dozen years were flown,
The king rode home once more.
At his gate he found her—a woman grown,
That lovely child of yore.

Woman and wife was she; Her figure was bowed and gaunt; Her face was wan with misery, Furrowed by toil and want.

The king turned his horse's head, And rode to a kingdom near; To the princess there he softly said Fond words she blushed to hear. She was a maiden fair,
Young and happy and great;
Her beauty was far beyond compare
With that worn, white face at the gate.

The nuptials passed in state,

The king brought home his bride,
And the king saw none at the palace gate
Save the fair young queen at his side.

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WHY THE MESSENGER BOY RAN

JIMMY—Dat new kid seems ter be in an orful hurry.

JERRY—Dat's all right. He ain't carryin' no message. He's goin' up to de news-stand ter git de new book about Cross-eyed Chris, de Crafty Cracksman.



ONLY THE GOOD DIE YOUNG

PREPARE for the worst!" said Dr. Gill,
And every voice grew hushed and still;
Relations from far, and friends from near,
Did crowd with a vim his words to hear.
"Prepare for the worst!" said Dr. Gill—
"There's plenty of life in Robert still!"

CARL BARCLAY.



ALL HOPE LOST

 $^{66}\,B^{LUE\,!}$ Well, I should say I am. The rich uncle, to whose property I was sole heir, has just—"

"Has just what?"

"Been converted to Mormonism."



HIGH BALLS

HAVE just come off a big bat—" said the base-ball.
"'Sh," replied the ping-pong ball; "don't give it away, but I have been
on a little racket myself to-day."

IN THE SHADOW OF FUJI

By Carlton Dawe

"Where Fuji-Yama rears his crest, And tinkling bells in temples ring, And girls are picturesquely drest, And love is ever on the wing."

ROM the beginning of things, the mountain had been with her. a companion in her solitude, a confidant in her hour of trouble. a child, it swayed her imagination; as a woman, it was still a predominant factor in her life. It walled her imagination, as it did her view of the world; it was the alpha and omega of life, the beginning and the end of all things. Rain, storm, snow, sunshine—all were attributed to Fuji, or to the Great White Spirit who held dominion over its cloud-capped heights. The peasants, who dwelt upon the slopes of the great mountain, told strange tales of that masterful Spirit, tales of terror, in which phantom foxes and paralyzing ghosts played an important part. And, on those stormy nights when the wind howled and shrieked across the land. Momo, her head covered with the bedclothes, would lie quaking with fear, and murmuring to herself, "The Spirit of the Mountain is abroad, the Great White Spirit, with his pack of fierce, white foxes." And to the Supreme And to the Supreme Deity, to the August Centre of Heaven, .would she pray for courage and consolation.

She knew nothing of the life beyond the homestead, nothing of cities and the ways of worldly people. Once only had she been taken some distance from her home, and from a hilltop her conductors had shown her a wide, glistening plain, which they called *umi*, or the sea; and they told her incredible tales of great ships that came up out

of the waters, bringing strange men with hair like the sun at midday, and eyes as blue as the heaven that stretched above the crest of Fuji. But, just then, she was not capable of grasping the meaning of the sea, the great ships, or the men with sunshine in their hair. Her world was bounded by Fuji, her imagination thralled by its imaginary attributes. Just as all good could come out of Fuji, so, likewise, could all evil, and neither by word nor thought would she offend the Master Spirit, who held dominion over the all-pervading mountain.

On the lower slopes of Fuji, perhaps a mile or more from her homestead, stood the remains of a once magnificent Shinto temple. Its construction dated back into ages of which man had no record; but that it was a relic of the days of splendor its majestic ruins bore ample testimony. In those days, Shintoism was a real, living religion, not the makeshift and apology for a dying To-day, the temple was still consecrated to worship, and the ignorantly faithful still trudged up beneath the great granite torii, which were now a refuge-place for pigeons and other wild fowl. There they prayed, to whom they knew not, for that happiness and worldly prosperity which could never be theirs.

Hither Momo wended her way, to offer orisons at the altar of the dead gods. It is true, like all wicked people, she had her moments of doubt. If prayers were to be continually ignored, what was the use of praying? She had begun by praying for little things, but, finding modesty of no avail, she rose in her demands. The result bowever,

was the same. And this was not wise of the gods, because she had not been unreasonable in her requests. Yet she could not battle with fate; such a proceeding was beyond her dreams. But there grew up in her heart an unsatisfied longing, and, when she prostrated herself before the shrine, she rendered up her soul to the abstract being, who was supposed to sit in clouds and regulate the world.

Sometimes, her mind reverted to the glittering plain which they had called the sea, and she would ask odd questions here and there of the great ships that spouted smoke and fire, and of the men with the white skin and the golden hair, who came from down under the waters. But little information was forthcoming. It was said that the men were great in stature, that they were great fighting men, and that they wandered all over the globe in search of gold. Nor did there seem anything incongruous in this, though it was evidently hurled at the white men as a sneer; for she knew how hard her own family worked for a few pieces of silver, and it seemed quite reasonable that men should go farther afield for gold.

But one day, as she climbed the mountain-side to her devotions, strange adventure befell her. The sun had poured with an unreasonable heat upon the dusty pathway, and, when she reached the great granite steps that led directly to the temple, she paused for a moment, in the shade of one of the giant torii. Aloft, the pigeons cooed one to the other, and the air was full of the drowsy hum of in-Behind her towered the mountain; before her stretched the valley, with here and there a homestead peeping out among green leaves. Beyond the valley again, hid by the farthest hill, lay the sea, and beyond that eternity.

She sat in the shade of the great boulder, and let her gaze wander dreamily across the landscape. It had been an exhausting ascent, and her little feet, in their rough sandals, had grown sore and weary. Vague thoughts stole drowsily through her mind, and she opened wider the bosom of her kimono, to let the air play around her neck. Her tired eyes roamed aimlessly across the wide expanse of blue, palpitating air. Then, slowly, her eyelids closed, and she fell asleep.

When she wakened, it was with the vague knowledge that she was not alone. A feeling of terror seized her, and, with a little cry, she sprang hastily to her feet, but only to drop as quickly to her knees. For there before her stood—what was it?

Her dreaming had been short; but, short as it was, she had been wafted on air to the summit of Fuji, and she was on the point of being brought before the Great White Spirit, when, of a sudden, she awoke, and behold, there she stood in the awful presence!

She cowered low on the step, and hid her face in her hand; and he who had surprised her thus was still more surprised at her extraordinary behavior.

"Pardon, my lord," she sobbed; "if

I have offended, pardon."

As yet he did not understand, but he smiled, half irresolutely, at the crouching figure.

"There is nothing to pardon. Look at me, child. I shall not harm you."

The voice reassured her, and yet she had not the courage to take her hands from her eyes.

"Are you not the Spirit of the Mountain?" she asked.

"No," said he; "but you are."

Her single quick glimpse of him had revealed a figure identical with that of her dreams—a man of tall stature, with a white skin, blue eyes and golden hair. If this was not the Spirit of the Mountain, who could it be?

"Come, come," he said, in a coaxing tone, being evidently anxious to allay her fears, "I am no spirit, but a man—a stranger. I found you dreaming in the sunshine, and I stopped to look. Was it a liberty? Am I forgiven?"

Truly, this was no masterful spirit, who thus craved forgiveness from her, Momo, of whom forgiveness had never been asked before. She found it a strange sensation, with something of

delight in it, for she was a woman. And, despite her fears, there was that ineradicable feminine curiosity which so often leads the sex to the verge of destruction, if not quite over the precipice. Who was he, this stranger, and how came he to be so like the god of her dreams?

She lowered her little, dimpled hands, but for some time she would not raise her eyes. He, looking down, noted the slender column of throat, the firm flesh that sloped away beneath the wide kimono. He knew by the rise and fall of her bosom that she was agitated, and once more he hastened to relieve her fears.

"It was rude of me; I am sorry. I ought to have passed on. But you were dreaming, child, and in your dreams you looked so lovely that I was forced to stop and worship."

These were strange words, but pleasant, and her heart gave a quicker throb, and for a moment she looked up and met his admiring glance. Then, down went her lids again, and she seemed to find some object of infinite interest in the valley below.

"Look at me," he said; but she still fixed her glance on the wide-stretching

valley.

"What do they call you?" he asked.
"Momo," she answered, slowly, the rich blood flushing her sweet face.

"Truly, a most appropriate name—the most luscious of fruit, the most delightful of girls. Look at me, little one. Don't be afraid. Tell me why I find you here, dreaming in the sunshine?"

Man is supposed to be a reasonable creature, and, at times, woman is not without her share of reason. Agitated as Momo was, she was more than half-conscious of the absurdity of her pose. This was neither the Great Spirit of the Mountain, nor one of his pack of spirit foxes, but a man, a veritable man, one of those white giants who came from under the sea. And, when he sat beside her and took her hand, she let it linger in his hard, wide palm, and throbbed through all her being. She looked into his eyes, and found

that they were like bits of the sky when the whole face of heaven is clear of clouds; she saw the sunbeams frolic in his hair, until it glowed like living fire.

"I was on my way to the shrine," she explained; "but the heat was great, and I grew tired."

"To pray for your sins?" he asked, with a laugh. "What sins have you?"

"Have we not all sins?"

"Truly." If it was not a sin, this look he cast on her, what was it?

"And then I dreamed of the Great Spirit, and, when I awoke, behold, you stood before me!"

"And so I might have stood forever, had you not awakened. And this Great Spirit—what of it?"

"He is king of the mountain. He brings the rain and the wind, and shakes the thunder in the skies. And often in the night-time he hunts upon the mountain with his pack of spirit foxes, and huge foxes they are, with big, red eyes and great, long tails."

"Ah! And what is he like, this

spirit?"

"He is white, like you, and he has hair like yours, and eyes like yours."

"You have seen him?"

"No; but when I awoke and saw you standing there, I thought he had come to me."

So that explained her terror. He edged just a little nearer, the same

amused smile on his face.

"If I were the spirit," he said, "I should seize you in my arms and bear you to my caves on the top of Fuji, and I should keep you there as my queen; and, when I hunted with my spectral pack, you should ride with me on the biggest and wooliest fox, and we would scour the mountain and the valley, and make people cover their heads with fright as they heard us hurrying by."

At this she shook her head. The picture did not please her. "I am

glad you are not," she said.

"I am nothing so important," he admitted, "nothing but a wandering *Igirisu-jin*, who craves your pardon for this intrusion."

So this was an Englishman—one of the people who came from under the sea. She knew by his manner of speaking that the language was not native to him—he said so many curious things, and mispronounced so strangely. But an *Igirisu-jin*—it was wonderful!

"Sometimes I paint pictures," he continued; "I heard of this wonderful Shinto temple, and came to make a sketch of it. Blessed be the fate that led my steps hither!" he added.

It was strange that any one should come far to see the temple. She had seen it nearly every day for seventeen years, and so she told him, and expressed wonder at his enthusiasm.

"Seventeen years!" he repeated, "seventeen years!" And then he laughed and kissed her hand and helped her to her feet. "You shall be my guide," he said. "Come."

So, hand in hand, they climbed the steps beneath the great toris, and she pointed out each particular object of interest, and told a legend here, a superstition there; and he knelt with her before the shrine, and watched her as she offered orisons to the dead gods.

"I must paint the temple," he thought, "and I shall paint her somewhere in the foreground. But how shall I pose her so that she shall be seen in all her loveliness?" And then he knew he must paint his picture, and that the work would take days, and—and he had not come intending to stay. He spoke to her of the dilemma, and she knitted her brows "Unless and looked much perturbed. I can find a shelter," he said, "I must go away again."

The thought stabbed her like a knife. Go away! "We will find you a shelter," she said.

A priest came by at that moment, and to him they explained the situation. He shook his head. They like not strangers, these priests; but when Stamford said, "I will pay well for the accommodation," the priest discovered a vacant cell.

The sun was sinking behind a shoul-

der of the mountain, when Stamford and the girl descended the granite steps, worn very thin in places by the tired feet of countless pilgrims. But she no longer stood off from him in terror. His arm was about her, his hand held her two hands, and, now and again, he would stop suddenly, look into her eyes, and then, being unable to bear the clear, frank expression which he found there, would close them with kisses.

"To-morrow, Momo!" he whispered.
"To-morrow, O my lord!"

And, on the morrow, she trudged upward, and he posed her, and made a pretense of painting her portrait; but the fever was in his eyes, and his hand shook as with palsy.

A week passed, and still another week, and, at length, he knew that he must go. But she had grown very dear to him, and he a thousandfold dearer to her. What was he to do; how break the news? He had not ventured to breathe a word of parting. and she had not even dreamed of it. And now, when he had determined upon the act, he knew not how to Por, in her heart, she had set up a shrine, and within its holiest of holies she had placed his image. And there she knelt to the real, living god, at last, no longer an abstract theory, a potential wonder, but one who swayed her, sleeping and waking, one in whom was the essence of life.

And yet this parting had to be, and he blamed himself for submitting to a moment of madness. Did he know what would happen? Did he know what the end would be? In a way, yes; but this end was not quite what he had foreseen. Of course, it could not go on forever; that she must have known as well as he. Perhaps, vaguely, some such thought had come to her at times, but, if so, she had put it away with a smile. could he, being so happy, forsake his happiness? As upon her the sun showered warmth and joy, so must he be a partaker of her happiness.

Stamford laid claim to no particular heroic qualities. If he was no better than the rest of mankind, he certainly believed that he was no worse; at least, he had believed so up to this point. But it was the pathetic, trusting look of her brown eyes that laid bare the ignominy of his conduct. If only she would not look at him, or if she would not look at him in such a way!

That morning he had said to himself: "I will go to-morrow. I must go." Yet, when she came, bringing him fresh fruit and milk from the village below, and when she looked at him with all her soul in her eyes, his courage faltered. If, in the midst of his passion, he had behaved cruelly, callously, he was neither cruel nor callous enough to smite her down in cold blood. Yet, all day, the thought was with him, for it had to be, and, if she failed to notice his restraint, it was because her love admitted of no suspicion.

It was later than usual when they walked down beneath the great torii. His arm was about her, and she, as if anticipating danger, clung closer to his side.

"The picture is finished, Momo," he said.

She sighed. "My lord has made me very beautiful."

"But not so beautiful as thou art, O my dream! When I go to Tokio, I will have it set in the best frame the city can produce."

She caught a trip, a sound, a hesitancy in his tone which startled her.

"My lord will go to Tokio?"

"Surely, now that the work is finished."

"But he will come back?"

He pressed her to him, and, as if to avoid that awful, appealing look, gazed far out across the fast-dark-

ening valley.

"I will come back," he said. But he shuddered, for it was a lie he uttered, and in his soul he knew it. Yet, was it kind, or was it cruel, thus to lie? He could not say, but he meant it in kindness. "She will look for me for a week, a month—and then!" But this thought brought

not the consolation he desired. He pressed a roll of notes into her hand.

"What is this, my lord?" she said.
"Money," he answered, guiltily, feeling more like a coward than he had ever felt in his life.

"But, my lord, I do not wish

monev."

"It may be useful," was all he could say; "keep it." And, almost roughly, he pressed it into the bosom of her dress, and she, poor child, seized his rough hand, and carried it to her lips.

Early the next morning, she climbed the steps to the temple, but he was gone. She reached his cell, she sat where they had sat, she walked where they had walked. But a great loneliness seemed suddenly to have fallen upon the earth, and, when she looked up at Fuji, even the great mountain was frowning.

With a heavy heart, she retraced her steps down the valley, though his promise that he would return shone like a beacon through the gloom. She never dreamed of doubting him; she would not so wrong her illustrious lord. It was sad, this separation, that was all; but he would come again, as he had said, and then the earth would bloom again, and even Fuji would forget to frown.

But he came no more. The days sped one after another; the weeks ran into months, but he came not. Every day, at the self-same hour, she climbed to the great torii, and sat where he had first discovered her, a step doubly consecrated in her memory, and still the wished-for vision never came. "He has not forgotten," she moaned. "He could not forget! He is ill-dead!" And she shuddered at the thought. If he were dead! Well, she, too, could die. It would be an easy matter. But, if he were not dead, and one day he were to come back, and she not there to greet him——!

Little by little, the neighbors learned her story and mocked her, saying, "Behold, she climbs the clouds for her phantom lover!"

Phantom lover, forsooth! And she had held him in her arms, and felt his breath against her neck, his heartbeat close to hers! She went on her way with stern, set face. These people were of the earth. Unlike her, they had never lived in the clouds.

Then, there came a time when she was no longer strong enough to climb the hill, and she now found the first use for his money, in bribing another to undertake the journey. And then, after a time, she was daily seen mounting the path once more, only now she carried a baby on her back. And the neighbors laughed louder than ever, and, when they looked into the wonderful blue eyes of the child, they laughed still more. she only pressed it closer to her breast, and cooed rapturously over it, as mothers will, and told it of the golden-haired one, who came to her in a dream, and prophesied the dawning of a glorious day.

But that day never dawned. When the child grew ill, she said to herself: "He will come now; he must know." When the child died, she sent a broken-hearted wail up to the stars. But Fuji still frowned, unpityingly; the stars were cold, and silent, and far off. "Now I am alone," she said; "his heart will tell him that I am alone, and he will come back to me."

But he did not come.

Winter and Summer saw her trudging the path that led up to the temple, and she always sat on the one particular step, and always looked in the same direction across the valley. "For it was here he found me," she would say to herself, "and here he shall find me when he comes."

But still he did not come.

One black, Winter morning, as a priest ascended the great granite steps, he almost stumbled against a human body that was doubled up in the snow. He touched it; it was frozen stiff. He turned it over.

Momo had kept her last vigil



DEVIL LORE

HOW strangely words and phrases of the day Combine to please the mental appetite; It made me smile to hear Myrtilla say:
"The Imp o'Darkness can't be impolite."



ARE you fond of sports, Mrs. Wheatpit?"
"I ought to be; I married one."



HOW long were you in Boston?"
"Long enough to think in six syllables, and to acquire five new religions."

ETOILE DU SOIR

Par le Vicomte J. de Beaufort

LA DOUCE volupté du soir mélancolique, T'en souvient-il?—s'était alanguie en nos yeux Où déjà la lueur incertaine des cieux Pâlissait aux clartés d'une étoile idyllique.

La pure étoile, à peine éclose au firmament, Dès son premier rayon chercha ton front d'aimée, Sure d'y recueillir la caresse embaumée Que la fleur vespérale exhale en s'endormant.

T'en souvient-il? Cette ombre heureuse et transparente Où nous errions émus d'un silence plus vrai Que tous les mots brûlants d'un amour enivré, En sens-tu la tiédeur encore pénétrante?

Revois-tu le sentier, les feuilles, l'or éteint Du couchant, les reflets d'horizon sur la terre, Et tout autour de nous qui rêvions, le mystère De la nuit vaporeuse apparue au lointain?

Et pourquoi mon regard s'éclaira d'une extase, Où mon cœur s'étonnait d'aimer jusqu'à pleurer? Et pourquoi je voulus, sans pouvoir, murmurer Je ne sais quelle indifférente et vaine phrase.

Cependant que ma voix en un sanglot mourait, T'en souvient-il? Te souviens tu de cette larme? Et pourquoi ton sourire eut alors tant de charme, Lorsque son chaste aveu s'unit à mon secret?

Et pourquoi tu levas tes yeux vers une étoile Qui pût garder pour nous, à travers tous les temps, Cette heure que depuis aucun soleil ne voile, T'en souvient-il toujours, comme moi qui t'attends?

Que de jours ont vécu! mais l'étoile est la même; Il n'est point de passé pour moi, si j'ai su voir La tendresse de qui j'ai reçu tout espoir; Je vis en un présent éternel, puisque j'aime!

Puisque j'aime, tout vit pour moi de ton amour; Je te revois partout et comme au premier jour, Souriante et scellant en mon cœur la promesse. Qui renferme un baiser d'immortelle jeunesse!

A LUCKLESS LOVER

I BROKE it off with Anna Long—
She was too short, you see;
With Mabel Wright things all went wrong,
We never could agree;
Then there was awkward Mary Blue,
Who was so very green;
And Bessie Goode would never do,
Because she was so mean.

It couldn't last with Jennie Read,
Because she wouldn't write;
And, after just one day, I freed
Myself from Nellie Knight;
I soon concluded that Miss Crewe
Must seek another mate;
And gave up Edith Early, too,
Because she came down late.

Miss Wood possessed an iron will;
Miss Gay was always sad;
Miss Sharp could see the point, but still
She said my jokes were bad;
Miss Rich was destitute of "tin";
Too melting was Miss Frost;
In earnest, then, I wooed Miss Winn,
And—same old luck!—I lost!

FRANK ROE BATCHELDER.



AND SO IT DID

H^E (prominent novelist)—I have been working ten hours a day for the last ten years.

SHE—I should think it would tell on you.

"It does speak volumes."



A LAST RESORT

BELLE—And she married for love? Lena—Yes. It was the best she could do.

AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN MEN

By the Viscount de Santo-Thyrso

OON after the Spanish-American war, I happened to read a provincial Spanish paper which abused, in most outrageous terms, poor Christopher Columbus, as the primary cause of the defeat of the Spanish arms. I am afraid that many mothers of marriageable daughters in Europe have a like grudge against the Genoese sailor who discovered America. Undoubtedly, one of the charms of American girls is rooted in their fathers' capacity for making money; this, however, is only one of their attractions, and it appeals but to wise young men. Now, men are seldom wise; if they are so before thirty, it is an infirmity.

What makes the American girl a most attractive being is her self-confidence, amiability and good temper. Now, I am not a flatterer, and I must say that pretty women are as much in the minority in the United States as in any other country. Beauty, like gold, is scarce everywhere. You can find more gold in California than in Europe; but even in California you certainly find more dross than gold. So it is with women. In some places, or in some countries, the number of pretty women is greater than in others, and in this branch of natural production the United States is not behind-This, however, is only a foreigner's view of the subject. To tell the truth, I have never met an American girl of twenty who did not consider herself fascinating; this is selfconfidence; and for a woman to believe she is beautiful is half-way to real beauty. In the first place, a plain woman, who is aware of her plainness, is unhappy. Man is a selfish animal, and, despite what novels say about sad women and the power of tears, unhappiness is as repellent to a healthy mind as disease to a healthy body. Then, the conscious plain woman gives up every thought of pleasing, and, therefore, she does nothing to make herself attractive. She does not smile, she does not try to be attractive. She becomes sour or dull, or both.

On the other hand, a plain woman, who thinks herself pretty, expects to please. She exerts herself to do so, and taxes her dressmaker and her milliner to show off her good points. She tries to be witty, gay, mirthful—in a word, to be attractive; and, the limited politeness and the unlimited conceit of the other sex helping, she is probably happy. She may, indeed, never find a husband, but that is another story. Hope, however, will last longer than youth, so she will try to please long after there is any demand In this way, we find in the American girl a worldly expression of the three theological virtues: Faith in her charms; Hope to find a husband; and, let us call it Charity, a sweet virtue that by itself can easily lead us to the realization of our Hope.

The American girl believes not only in herself, but in the great sisterhood of American girls. Let it be said in her honor that I never met an American girl who did not praise her friends—a most uncommon proceeding among the fair sex in other lands. I suppose it was the girls who invented the first trust in America, a trust to invade the

matrimonial markets of the world, in the teeth of foreign competition. At any rate, the kindness of American girls to one another is one of the sweetest peculiarities of their character.

The American woman considers herself the equal of man in a few things, and his superior in everything else. This superiority is not contested by her countrymen. Nowhere have I seen a greater reverence for women than in the United States. The rights of womanhood are an addition to, not a substitute for, the rights of manhood. In fact, the attitude of the men toward the women in America is more than chivalrous. They look up to their womankind.

The men keep but one privilege themselves: that of making For a long time, I wonmoney. dered whether, in the eyes of American men, women were idols or regarded as objects of luxury. They are neither; they are the uncontested rulers of society. Here is one of the characteristics of the American mind: it attends to its own business and nothing else. Now, society is the women's business. Any American man may dream of ruling the United States, including Hawaii, Porto Rico and the Philippines; but not one will ever dream of ruling his own house, even to the exclusion of the kitchen and the laundry. This summarizes the difference between the two sexes, for many American women not only rule their homes, but aim also at ruling their country. These are the intellectual women.

Intellectualism in America is a profession, not a tendency or a taste. An intellectual woman talks about nothing but the loftiest subjects. If you take such a woman to dinner, you may be sure to have higher education served with the terrapin, and the franchise of women with the canvasback duck. The duck may be a blackhead, and the terrapin chicken bones, but you are sure to get the real article in education and franchise. When you find yourself in such a plight, the only thing I can advise is, "genteel intoxication."

The fact that society is the women's department in American life accounts for their social accomplishments being far superior to those of the men. America, a man who can talk—in the ordinary sense of the word—is almost as much of a rarity as a woman who can be silent. A man may be able to discuss the most serious matters, or to lecture on a most interesting subject, but he cannot chat. The trouble is that he makes a business of everything he does, and cares for no other business. Even his pleasures he enjoys so thoroughly and conscientiously that they become matters of business. The profit may be enjoyment instead of money, but he takes as much trouble to get the largest amount of enjoyment out of his exertions as he would to get the largest sum of money out of a business dealing. When you see an American golf-player, you think that he is looking for his dinner in the holes on the links. You pass, on the road, an American amateur cyclist, and you are led to believe that his daily bread depends on his arriving at his destination within a certain time. Not at all; he is simply enjoying himself. He exhausts his pleasure, although it seems more probable that his pleasure will exhaust him.

Naturally, if two men, having the same fad or the same profession, are thrown together, they are sure to be charming to each other. But, if men of different professions and hobbies foregather, they take refuge in telling sto-Now, ordinarily, there is no pleasure in listening to a story; the pleasure is in telling it. More than once, I have been thrown with half-a-dozen charming, witty club-men, gathered about a table, sipping cocktails and telling most amusing stories. The speaker, with a beaming face and a merry twinkle in his eyes, expatiates on the details, shapes his periods, prepares his effects, makes you long for the final point. Meanwhile, his hearers are longing for the end, regardless of the point. They are nervous and abstracted, with anxious looks and haggard faces, they are thinking all the

time of the story they are going to tell, and how they are going to tell it. It would seem more reasonable for each of them to tell his story aloud to himself, in the solitude of his bedroom. But man is naturally a gregarious animal, and, as one cannot enjoy one's cigar in the darkness, one would find no flavor in one's story in solitude.

Foreigners used to say that in America the woman is superior to the man. The fact is that foreigners regard Americans only from the social point of view. As the women rule the social and the men the business world, the American woman is naturally a superior social being to the American man. She is the soul of society. She makes its rules. That is why there is no society in the world where so much respect is shown to women.

There is one matter of common interest to both sexes, one that, in fact, requires their mutual cooperation—this is, love. When you see a young woman and a young man talking together, they are probably flirting. Old men seldom mix with the fair sex. But, even during the most desperate flirtation, each party keeps to its specialité: society or business. The girl does all the talking, and the man most of the kissing.

The result of this state of affairs is that the sexes do not amalgamate. Europe, woman is always dependent on man. She is nothing by herself. She is an adjective, while man is a The noun can exist by itself, but an adjective without a substantive is a meaningless, silly thing. Girls in Europe are adjectives on the lookout for nouns; not so in America, where spinsters have a status of their The old maid, such as she is in Europe, does not exist in America. I have met in America a number of charming unmarried ladies, who, in Europe, would have coiffé Sainte Catherine long ago, and still they keep delightful houses, they receive their friends, give elegant parties, and are invited everywhere. They are as much courted as young women would They are not in the least priggish. And, when they grow older, they are much more independent than men. An old maid usually lives by herself. I hardly know an old bachelor in America who does not seek the shade of a petticoat, which may hang from a sister, a niece or a cousin, to cover the chair opposite to him at the dinnertable.

This spirit of independence in woman gives her the royal grace with which she receives the homage of her male friends. She is not beseeching or grateful. She may go out of her way to fascinate a recalcitrant man, but her idea is to subjugate, to conquer not to surrender. I have known several American Don Juans. They were all in petticoats. The male Don Juan would be ostracized by public opinion, in a society dominated by the feminine element. I have met a few rakes, but the women avoid them—at least, in public—and style them compromising men. Now, in Europe, there are some women who are compromising and some who are not, but every man between twenty and fifty is necessarily compromising.

This is the natural consequence of the fact that the rules of society in America are made by the women, while in Europe they are made by the men. You cannot do away with the antagonism between the sexes. Woman can never be the equal of man; she has to be either his superior or his inferior. In Africa, the woman works, and the man rules; in Europe, the man both works and rules; in America, the man works, and the woman rules. Women are the ruling class, the aristocracy of America.

The American women have not the useful qualities of the sterner sex, but they have more of the agreeable ones. They are less energetic, but more refined. They cannot make money, but they are unrivaled for spending it. If the man is coal, the woman is diamond.

Every woman in America is prepared to be a princess. She knows that she can become one, while her brother's chances of ever being a real prince are infinitely smaller. Of course, I know what unmixed contempt true Americans have for princes and that sort of thing; nor is it their fault, if their pedigrees connect them with the crowned heads of This is so common that I have some misgivings whether there be any legitimate dynasty left in However, the fact remains, that, while the woman acquires aristocratic graces by a careful social education, the man prepares himself to fight the battles of life as a shrewd man of business, a hard and useful worker.

Nowhere have I noted a greater divergency of views than between the two sexes in America. As a rule, in American homes, the wife takes no interest in the husband's business, nor the husband in the wife's. The husband's business is to provide the ways and means, to open an account, and to write cheques. The wife attends to the social duties of the family. She makes her home attractive, she calls on her friends, she has a day at home. She occupies herself with the social account, and pays not only her own, but her husband's social debts.

The husband gets up in the morning, and goes out to his business. or ten o'clock, he is at his office. four or five o'clock, his work is over. I mean it, literally. The men in America follow Saint Augustine's precept, age quod agis—do what you are They care for nothing but business from nine in the morning till four in the afternoon. From four in the afternoon until nine in the morning there is no such thing as business, for them. They change their thoughts with their clothes. As long as they wear a business-suit—that is what they call their tweeds—their minds are occupied with business thoughts. When the husband is through with his business for the day, the wife begins with hers, unless she has already had a luncheon party, attended exclusively by women. At four o'clock, if it is not her day at home, the wife has to consume several cups of tea at the houses of friends; she pays her dinner calls, she returns other people's visits; in a word, she performs her social tasks. The husband, in the meantime, having nothing to do with teas—unless, perchance, he is in the tea trade, in which case he regards such functions with favor—goes to his club, in order to relax his mind by telling his stories over a sociable mintjulep or a Manhattan cocktail; then he goes home to take his wife out to dinner. At dinner, of course, the only person he cannot sit by is his wife. Late in the evening, the pair go home, en tête-à-tête, for the first time during the whole day. I suppose the late arrival at home precludes an interchange of views between husband and wife. As they rarely lunch together, they never quarrel. When they do happen to lunch together, as they sometimes do on Sundays, no difference of opinion can possibly arise, for they never consider the same subject. The wife chats, the husband rests. She is very fond of him, he is very proud of her. She is very happy that he can make all the money she wishes to spend, and he blesses her for knowing how to spend all the money he can make.

I never saw an American woman cross. I may have seen one angry, but never cross. The men, on the other hand, may be rough, or even rude, but they are never unkind. With a bright temper and a kind heart, things should go on smoothly.

When American girls marry Europeans, it is curious to note the adaptability of those girls. I have known several American women, married in England, who have adapted themselves so thoroughly to their new surroundings that, as an American friend of mine used to say, they have overdone it. They are so extremely English that one familiar with this phenomenon will divine, at once, that they are American.

The first thing they change is their idea of propriety. But, then, I must say that, in America, I am always at a loss as to what is, and what is not,

proper. For instance, I could drive out in the country, or go bicycling, with a girl, and nobody would blame me, or her, for it. But it would be improper to take her to a restaurant for luncheon. All is well as long as you starve. As eating is not an improper thing in itself, and eating in public is considered, according to the circumstances, either a fashionable thing to do, or a trial to go through, I do not really see the point. Now, I would much rather that a young girl of my family should dine with a young man, say, in the palm-room of the Waldorf-Astoria, than that she should go driving with a judge of the supreme court. For, in the first hypothesis, I should know where she was; while, in the second, the Lord only would know, and none but the judge could tell.

According to the American ideas of propriety, a woman may take a man in her victoria, and drive with him anywhere but to the door of his club. Propriety is always a matter of convention; but much more in America than in other countries. In Europe, most ideas of propriety come from the former state of servitude in which women were held. While gradually freeing them, men have made certain rules, to be observed in the every-day intercourse of the two sexes. rules have been modified, but some restrictions still prevail that seem absurd, and, to more broad-minded people, an outrage upon the dignity of womanhood. These rules are remnants of the past, like the wig of the lord-chancellor, or the regulations of an inauguration ball. But, in America, where the social, if not the political, emancipation of woman is a fact, there is no room for anything of the kind. The women themselves make the rules of propriety, and they do it with that logic and precision that are the characteristics of the sex. men obey the women-made mandates, deportment being under the jurisdiction of the social court; and, in the end, it makes absolutely no difference.

If the self-confidence of the American man is more aggressive than that

of his countrywoman, he still possesses a quality that makes him very attractive-sincerity. Whatever he does, he does in earnest—he always means it. This accounts for his wonderful success, both individual and national. The American believes in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, especially of the variety that is produced on his side of the water: he believes in the star-spangled banner, in the American Constitution, in his public schools, in the fertility of his soil, in the beauty of his sisters, in the wisdom of his rulers, and in the real existence of his ancestors. believes in himself and in everything American, and his faith has moved mountains. He is always right in believing, although, now and then, he believes in the wrong thing.

The remark I have made before, that the American is a specialist, does not mean that he cannot change his specialty. On the contrary, his adaptability is a wonderful thing. You take any of a hundred journalists, place him at the head of an important public bureau, and the work of that bureau is always excellent. The official publications of the United States are the most interesting and contain the most reliable information of any I have ever read.

The most striking instance of this adaptability happened during the Spanish-American war, four years ago. A certain cavalry regiment was raised by one of the most distinguished living men in the United States, who is, at the same time, one of the most remarkable personalities I have ever met in my wandering life. That man, who is as sensible as he is bold and energetic, declined the colonelcy of his regiment, because, being a civilian, he thought he had not the proper qualifications for leading a regiment without undergoing some training in the military profession. The Government had to select another man; but, having no soldier available, and considering that the business of a cavalry regiment is wholesale slaughter, it appointed a doc-Now, this doctor proved to be, as

the circumstances required, a distinguished soldier, an able politician and a remarkable administrator. He fought like a veteran, too, and made a new country. I am sure that he was a good doctor; afterward, he was successively, a good soldier and a good organizer, as he happened to have good brains. He dropped his former specialty, medicine, in order to adopt a new one; but to this one he devoted himself, soul and body, and he remained a specialist, although in another line.

Every American thinks that his work is the pivot on which the universe turns. The universe, of course, is the United States, with a few accessories, such as Europe, Asia, the moon and the sun. It was necessary to have Europe, so that the United States might be discovered, and Asia is highly convenient as a market for the overproduction of American industry. Moreover, it was most considerate of Providence to provide the sun and the moon, until the United States could spare the time to discover the uses of electricity for illuminating purposes.

When a man has a strong belief in his work, he does it honestly and thoroughly. That is the way in which every American man performs his task, however humble and uninteresting it may be. The faith the Americans have in their work gives a sort of idealism to their otherwise practical natures. This idealism is one of the most startling features of the American mind. They are sentimental, too, and, in most of their actions, you will find a puzzling mixture of sentimental and practical motives. They know right wrong; between the two, they can conceive no compromise. They do not acknowledge the existence of that easy, well-paved road that weak and well-meaning mankind has laid out between these two absolute principles. Everything that is not good is bad. They cannot understand that a thing can be neither good nor bad, but simply convenient. Therefore, their ideas are often absurdly theoretical; but they carry them out with the most

practical common sense. They do not pay the least attention to circumstances or surroundings; they set down a principle, as they lay out on paper the plan of a city. They make a law according to the principle, and the circumstances must adapt themselves to the law. The city is built according to the rectilinear plan that was drawn beforehand, and that plan must be complied with, in spite of opposing circumstances. This strange idealism, that takes no notice of material accidents, is a formidable power. It is childish; but it would be a serious matter to oppose a child that possessed the strength of a giant. One of the forms of this childishness is the faith of Americans in their leaders. The docility of an American crowd is surprising. They pretend to choose their leaders; and, once chosen, they obey them without the slightest resistance. An American enters a restaurant, and he almost invariably takes the table that the head-waiter gives him. I suppose he would consider it unconstitutional and revolutionary to take another.

A common characteristic in both men and women in America is that they do not care for money. The men like to make money, and the women delight in spending it. Money is to them what the cup, not the wine, is to the drinker. Any American girl would marry a poor young man, but she expects him to make all the money she needs. She will cheerfully rise with him. And, according to his means, she will spend, with the same dash, either two thousand or two millions of dollars. The man, as a rule, does not care to spend a farthing; whether he has two thousand or two millions of dollars, he will work just the same. His pleasure consists in handling the money, and in undertaking gigantic combinations. He regards dollars in the same way that horse-breeders regard stallions; not for riding purposes, but for reproduction.

My stay in the United States has upset all my economic ideas. I have

realized that individual thrift does not add to the national wealth. Money must be made and spent; so that, after all, women play as large a part as men, as regards the national wealth of the country. They are important factors in American prosperity, and I hope that the most flippant of American girls will be glad to know that she is the necessary complement of some laborious man. A centre of production is worth nothing without a correspondent centre of consumption.

The type I have attempted to describe is the real American man or woman, not the New Yorker or the Bostonian. In the large eastern cities people are more in touch with the external world and with European The national character is, ideas. therefore, lost, or very much modified, particularly, in the upper classes. The same thing happens in every You do not expect to find country. the real Spaniard in Madrid, or the real Russian in St. Petersburg. In such centres the inhabitants acquire, as in New York, a thick varnish of cosmopolitanism. Of course, if you scratch the New York fashionable or the refined Bostonian, you will find the American, as you find the Cossack beneath the Russian. But it is not the custom to scratch the people you meet.

Of my New York friends, very few have traveled westward; most of them have not been even as far as Washington, although they have crossed the ocean at least a score of times. This shows that New York is nearer to Europe than to San Francisco or Chicago. Indeed, New Yorkers have shaved off Uncle Sam's goatee. They have not lost the sterling quali-

ties of their race, but they have dropped some of its peculiarities and most of its external marks.

I should really be very sorry if, by some lamentable misunderstanding, my criticism were taken in an unfriendly spirit. Nowhere have I found more kind and true hospitality than in the United States. In no other country save my own can I boast of having more or better friends. Besides, I think the strength of the American people lies almost as much in their weaknesses as in their virtues. I have heard them called green: trees must be green to be fruitful. I myself have called them childish: it is only children who grow; it is only children or fools who are always honest and earnest, but fools do not grow. And I have no patience with fools, but I am ridiculously fond of children and of the United States.

I am afraid that these explanations are necessary to my American readers, for I know their susceptibility, due to their intense patriotism. Patriotism, for them, is a religion. For their country, they will sacrifice everything; in fact, they have done it more than once. Patriotism is the only fanaticism in America. It enters into the details of every-day life. The Stars and Stripes are more than a national emblem, they are a religious symbol. The American Constitution is the Koran of these believers, and I am not quite sure that there is not written somewhere in it: Only the United States are great and George Washington is their prophet.

But, if not in the Constitution, the sentence is written on the hearts of Americans, and I like them the better for it.

3

POSSESSION IS NINE POINTS

THE FRIEND—Well, Bobbie, are you holding your own in your classes? BOBBIE—I suppose so; I've been at the foot six months.

CERTAIN FRAGMENTS OF KAMAL

IF I have naught to fear, to guard, beware, Why I speak truth and laugh and do not care; But having much to lose, to keep, defy, Am I to blame who chain Love with a lie?

This is the sadness of Life's tragedies, That, looking back on them with wiser eyes, The dignity that draped them, falling, shows At best a little comedy of woes.

Who lies to many, tells the truth to one, May find how swift the sands of Justice run; The many trust him whom he would deceive; Who hears the truth alone will not believe.

Yea, I would love to-day, could I be sure That through the years the potion would endure; But, lo! I dread that hour when I must quaff Wisdom, and turn to wonder—and to laugh.

Nay, kill not Love with one blunt truth, for then Bitter his death and swift as lives of men; Let him die slowly, as a great hate dies, On the sweet poison of exquisite lies.

McCrea Pickering.



THE FRIENDLY SHADOWS OF NIGHT

OLD CRUSTEIGH—How did you dare, sir, to kiss my daughter last night on the dark piazza?
Young Gayboy—Gad, now that I've seen her by daylight, I wonder myself.



TESTIMONIAL

THANKSGIVING DAY, 12 M.

DEAR SIR:
I have used one bottle of your anti-fat, and do not hesitate to say that
the glorious medicine has saved my life.

Yours gratefully,

T. URKEY.



THE MAXIMS OF METHUSELAH

BEING THE ADVICE GIVEN BY THE PATRIARCH IN HIS NINE-HUNDRED, SIXTY-AND-NINTH YEAR, TO HIS GREAT-GRANDSON SHEM, ON THE LATTER'S TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY

By Gelett Burgess

Y son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding.

2 So that thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may win praise of women, and the joys of thy life be many.

3 When thou goest she will gladly receive thee: and when thou flirtest thou shalt not stumble;

4 For the days of my life are ninehundred, sixty-and-nine years, and I have seen much women.

5 ¶My son, I counsel thee, introduce not female contemporaries, one to another: verily, keep thy loves apart, lest their wrath kindleth.

6 Make no manner of personal remark to a woman, unless peradventure thou wisheth to hear it misquoted in thine ears for seventy and seven years withal;

7 Forget in no wise to speak of her new raiment; but remember also her attire of yore.

8 Tell not thy previous loves to a woman, lest she also tell thee hers;

9 See that thou givest a woman her way: gainsay her in nothing; howbeit if thou robbest the victory of all material advantages, the rest will content her.

ro Wouldst thou become acquainted with a damsel? See that thou havest a secret with her straightway.

11 ¶Who can find a consistent woman? Where is she who spitteth not secrets in her wrath?

12 For behold, a nineteen-inch waist is better than a high forehead: and harmony is better than honesty.

13 The young damsel yearneth for chivalry: but the matron desireth impertinence;

14 And no woman hurrieth in an-

swering a question.

15 ¶My son, wouldst thou know women? Incline thine ear unto my sayings;

16 She is like the stone on the hill-

side, difficult to be moved;

17 Yet once started and she goeth fast and far: and no man knoweth the end thereof.

18 She believeth that all men are vain and easily to be flattered;

19 Suffer her this belief that she may discover to thee her cunning: and her ways shall be made plain.

20 Her heart is older than her head: yea, her emotion is the mother of her

reason.

21 She remembereth anniversaries, even to the day thereof: and by your memory shall your love be measured.

22 When she is least sure, then is she most decided: and a stubborn woman is oft times mistaken.

23 She desireth many things, and is happy till she gets them.

24 Two things she holdeth dear:

mystery and mastery.

25 She holdeth a comely youth is one who knoweth it not: and a subtile man is one who provideth her with excuses;

26 Two things she cannot resist in a man: sentiment, because she hath it in store, and honesty, because she hath none of it;

27 She jesteth not at love until her heart be broken: and an unmarried woman getteth much experience.

- 28 My son, wouldst thou flatter women? Observe my wisdom and be not afraid with sudden fear. For a woman is a foolish conundrum, having no answer.
- 29 Talk seriously with a silly damsel: but with a wise virgin mayest thou be light-minded;
- 30 Compliment a silly maiden upon her wisdom: and the ancient matron thou shalt call by her given name;

31 For I give thee good doctrine: for-

sake not my law.

32 ¶Unless she telleth thee all she knoweth, the uttermost love is not in her, and she will escape thee privily;

33 When she giveth thee many reasons for not doing what she listeth, lo,

she can be persuaded.

34 When she ceaseth calling thee by thy name, be on thy guard; for this is the end of formality.

35 If she leadeth thee on to talk of thyself, she hath one of two motives withal: admiration or contempt.

- 36 Judge not a woman's beauty by the back of her head, lest the wise man scorn thee.
- 37 ¶A flattering deed is worth more than many compliments: and a pleasing letter worketh wonders;

- 38 Two kinds of women there be who smoke cigarettes: she who wisheth to, and she who wisheth two.
- 39 Some women lie to themselves, and some to others: few there be who do both.
- 40 Until she sendeth thee these words, Three letters have I written thee and burned them with fire, for my heart misgave me, thou hast not yet won her;

41 She who is engaged to thee should

have none other engagements.

42 My son, ere thou takest to thyself a wife, engage her in a game of poker: and much shall be revealed.

- 43 ¶Hear the instruction of a lover, and attend to know understanding, for of women have I known upward of five hundred in the days of my youth and my fame was in the land.
- 44 If thou wouldst be a judge of women, the worst as well as the best must thou know:
- 45 And the woman who wottest least is even as she whose heart is blackest: and the angel and the devil are as sisters, to one without knowledge;
- 46 For innocence and wickedness are not to be distinguished one from another save by experience.

THE RIVAL

SHE gave to him no eagerness
Of smile or glance, no swift, sweet note
Of welcoming—or, having less,
I would have leapt upon his throat.

Striving, we won but smile for smile, To each her fragrant finger-tips A calculated instant—while We famished for her lips, her lips!

Now—whisper but his name to her, Her tender eyes grow wistful, wide; The laces at her bosom stir— Curse him, he died!

ETHEL M. KELLEY.

THE HEART'S UNBURDENING

By Edwin Biorkman

THY, Mr. Laborde! I call this a rare pleasure."

Stopping at the top of the wide stairway that led from the veranda to the lawn in front of the hotel, she turned half-around to extend her gloveless right hand to a slender, gray-haired man who had just stepped aside to let her pass, and now stood waiting with bent, uncovered head. His attitude showed traces of embarrassment. At her words, he raised a pair of pale-blue eyes, of the kind that seem all softness until they unexpectedly turn hard and cold as polished steel. He took the offered hand, and held it in his own for a little

'As pretty as ever," he murmured, gazing wistfully at its creamy whiteness. "It reminds me of some flower - some very sweet and delicate flower-

The hand was quickly drawn back, and its owner remarked, with a slight touch of irony, "As gallant as ever.

The deep veranda was full of people, some dozing in arm-chairs, others chatting or looking languidly out over the wide sweep of sea, on which white sails glistened brightly in the cold morning sunlight; but nobody happened to be near the spot where these two had met.

They remained immovable, while each one stared into the other's face, as if trying to find there some reflections of what had once been. The man broke the silence first.

"It is wonderful how little you have

changed, in spite of——"

"Twenty years," she filled out, when he paused. "Twenty years! twenty years!" she repeated, a moment later; then, with a strange smile, half-mocking, half-sad:

'We have grown old in the mean-

time, Mr. Laborde."

"Not you," he protested, eagerly; and instinctively he let his eyes glide along the soft curves of her figure, a figure lithe as a girl's and yet possessing the fullness of maturity.
"I am forty," she said, "or almost that much. And you——?"

"Fifty," muttered the man, looking down, as if ashamed of the confession.

"You also have fared well at the hands of the great ravager, Time," she said, eying him critically. gray at the top-"

Age didn't do that," he remarked,

pointedly.

Her finger was raised in warning. "The same old fault! You still take yourself and the whole world, but especially yourself, too seriously. As I was going to say, a little gray at the top, but still erect, still slender, still handsome, and undoubtedly-" her tone froze—"still a great favorite."

"Of course," he agreed, the color on his cheeks deepening, perceptibly.

She imitated his tone. "Of course!" Then, with a tap of her foot and turning partially away from him, "You are married?"

A barely audible, "No," escaped his

She turned full on him again, with a surprised "Why?"

"I think you are married," was his

only reply.

Her turn to blush had come, and she bit her under lip, as if provoked. At last, she shook her head. "I have been," she whispered.

Something like a shock passed through the man. When he spoke again, each word seemed to be forced out with great difficulty. "And your—are your—children here?"

"I have none."

A long silence ensued. Wide-eyed, lost to her surroundings, she gazed at the ocean. He kept his eyes turned down, as if in fear that they might betray some emotion that stirred within him.

"Perhaps," he ventured, finally, "I don't know—perhaps, I am keeping you

away from your friends?"

No reply came; and he did not break in again upon her revery. Both seemed to have forgotten the present entirely, while giving themselves up to

contemplation of the past.

A large, white butterfly came fluttering toward them in zigzag flight, intoxicated, it might be thought, by the glory of the Summer morning, the sunshine and the flowers on the lawn that burned in rainbow colors. It caught her eye. As one waking with a dream still impressed on the mind, she put her hand up to her forehead. Then she pointed at the bright-winged little creature, now floating so near the ground that it seemed to be painted on the lawn's rich green.

"The soul of the past," she mur-

mured.

He looked up; his face darkened a little, and he asked, "Did the past have a soul?"

"Ask, rather, if it had a heart," she retorted, almost harshly.

"Did it?" he demanded, his eyes

searching hers.

"I think so." Her glance was held captive by his, until she shook herself free, with an effort which drove back into their graves all the dreams that had been haunting her. Some of the impulsiveness, that had charmed and frightened him in days gone by, reappeared suddenly in her manner and voice.

"Mr. Laborde," she said, "you have, with your well-known fondness for irrelevant remarks, hinted at some kind of connection between my married

state, now turned into widowhood, and your own too-long-protracted bachelorship. Did I understand you aright?"

He bowed, with a puzzled air. She

went on, in the same brisk way:

"I have been doing a great deal of thinking in a few brief moments, and, possibly, there has been a misunderstanding somewhere, or, perhaps, a bungling of matters by outside inter-We are both of age now, not ference. only physically, but mentally. should we be afraid of looking certain facts in the face, simply because they brought us some heart-burning once upon a time? Let us make up the account of the past. We may, after all, rescue a friendship out of the general wreck. And a friendship of twenty years' standing, you know, is a great and good thing in this everchanging world."

Laborde was leaning against a column. His face, over which shade and sunshine passed in rapid alternation, was turned toward her. His right hand gripped the balustrade; the left hand, holding his Panama hat, hung

by his side.

"Millie," he whispered, dreamily.

"Silly!" she rejoined, and laughed a little. "Now, first of all, let us put our present relations on a clear basis. A peace is always preceded by a truce, during which the combatants may exchange civilities of a formal character, but this does not cause them to embrace as friends. Remember, I am Mrs. Emily Kerrell Vanderplant, and you remain Mr. Laborde, until further notice. As yet, Millie is dead—and so is Francis."

The utterance of his name made her blush again, whereupon she pouted, in irritation at her lack of self-control. It made her look provokingly pretty. Their glances met, and both laughed. Her spirit had caught him.

"As you will!" he cried. "Let us resurrect the relics, and ascertain analytically and scientifically what the cause of death was—a bullet, dagger, poison, or, perchance, inborn lingering disease. Let us see—those chairs over in the corner there?"

"And, just behind the corner, there is a convenient window. We are unable to see anybody, but they will hear us. You men are always lacking in forethought."

"And you women are always thinking too far ahead, I sometimes fear."

They had been speaking in undertones. Now, she raised her voice a little above the pitch of ordinary conversation. "Yes, thank you, Mr. Laborde," she remarked, with an affable drawl, "I might walk along to the point. The breeze over there always gives me an appetite. Will you let me have your arm, please?"

As they moved down the stairs, her hand pressing his arm lightly, he whispered, under his breath, without turning his head:

" Millie."

The hand slipped from his arm. "I'll be good," he muttered.

She opened her parasol, leisurely, and then took his arm again. Silently, but for a few words exchanged once or twice when other promenaders were passed or met, they walked along the macadamized path, that meandered across the lawn and cut through a clump of weather-worn firs, at the base of a rocky point which jutted far out into the sea, sloping gradually until it disappeared beneath the water. Halfway between the general shore line and the apex of that promontory, a pair of huge, divan-shaped boulders offered convenient seats. On these, they sat down a few feet apart, so that their eyes could meet when they turned their faces slightly toward each other. For a while, the two rested in meditative silence.

Before them lay the green sea, still growling angrily at the thought of the buffets it had received from the storm of the previous day. As it rolled itself up against them, in an endless series of white-lipped, hissing waves, it seemed to clutch at the two silent figures on the shore, without ever reaching them. No cloud spotted the shining blue of the sky.

Her eyes sought, at last, the face of the man by her side, and dwelt long on his handsome, clear-cut profile. Gradually, a dimness crept into her eyes, obscuring her vision, and, when she spoke, her voice trembled.

"Why did you not come that day?"
"Why did I not come?" he repeated,
blankly, as if still dwelling in some
distant dreamland. Then, with a
shrug of his shoulders, "What difference would it have made?"

"Not so—oh, I hate that state of mind!" Her face hardened, and her voice had a cold, metallic ring. "Everything we do, or fail to do, in this world makes a great difference; only, we find it more comfortable to pretend that such is not the case. Why did you not come?"

"How could I?"

"How!" She gasped for breath for a moment.

He wheeled around, so that he came to face her, put one leg across the other, and clasped his hands about the knee.

"Yes; how could I?"

"Oh, I am not in a mood to solve riddles now," she said, impatiently.

A peculiar look came into his eyes. She noticed it, and interrupted what he was about to say.

"Don't call me, 'Millie'! That will not help you at all now. You must

answer my question."

The intensity with which she spoke made him smile. "Why, I have imagined all the time that it was I who—"

"You!" The word had the force of a blow, and the man winced under it.

Once more, both lapsed into silence. When she spoke, her voice sounded much deeper than before.

"Do you remember the dance at my father's Summer place, at the end of the season——?"

"I'll never forget it," he broke in.
"It was the last glimmer of light—all darkness after that."

Her eyelids drooped. The point of her shoe, just visible beneath the hem of her skirt, moved restlessly among the pebbles on the ground.

"Î fear we are getting a little too—too sentimental," she wavered.

"We'll never reach the main point in

this way. "That night, that night!" he per-

"What a frail thing is human happiness!"

She sighed a little just then, but whether from sadness or impatience it

would have been hard to tell.

"There was a girl that evening in her father's house-

"Yes," he interjected, fervently; "a dark-eyed, smiling girl."

She nodded. "Sylph-like."

She smiled a shadow of a smile.

"A bewitching girl."

"Perhaps."

"I see her still-"

"No, you don't. She is dead and gone, these twenty years. But she was in her bloom then, and was very happy for a little while. She had two admirers—no, she had many—but there were two of them she thought more of than all the others, or who thought more of her. One of those two-

"A fool, a very fool!" he cried.

"Undoubtedly. That young man was nearest and dearest to her heart; so she thought, at least. He and she danced together many times that night. They talked between the dances, and, sometimes, looked so deep into each other's eyes that they forgot to speak."

The man bent his head, and groaned. She did not seem to take notice of it.

"The girl felt that the young man's mind was full of something that burned for utterance, and yet could not shape itself into words. Her heart beat faster and faster, as she watched his struggles, half in fear and half in joy. At last, his emotions mastered his reserve and took expression in hurried, passionate speech. Just then, when the deciding word was on the tip of his tongue, the appearance of his only rival, if rival he had, interrupted him.'

The man said something between his

Still she went on.

"They—he and she—had to part, and were kept away from each other, until the guests began to leave, when the young man found a chance to whisper into the girl's ear, 'Till to-morrow -you will let me tell the rest to-morrow?' And she, silly, inexperienced little thing, felt as happy as a goddess, and smiled, and pressed the hand that held hers."

"And the next day—?" He spoke

hoarsely.

"The next day came," she resumed, "but not the young man. She waited all day for him and all night, first in joyful anticipation, then in breathless impatience, and, finally, in choking, heart-racking fear; but in vain. rival came instead, and he had also something to tell the young girl. She cared little what it was, but she was proud and listened to him, and, when he left her, she had engaged herself to become his wife. The other young man never explained. The girl never heard a word from him. did not see him again, until-untilto-day."

Her head drooped for a moment, but only for a moment. Then she raised it again, as if in defiance of her own weakness. Looking steadily at the man opposite her, she demanded once

again:

"Why did you not come?"

He was pouring pebbles from one hand to the other, while his eyes stared blindly out over the surging, whitestreaked sea.

"It all seemed so clear then." voice was toneless as the beat of a muffled drum. "But now, I don't

"You don't know?"

"I don't, and yet I do. I shall try to explain, as you insist on it, although— Listen! The young man went home that evening the happiest being who ever lived. During the night he could hardly sleep for joy and impatience. He rose the next morning with a song on his lips. Doubt and fear had no place in his heart. He walked about as in a trance, hearing but vaguely what was said to him, and answering with meaningless words. close friend, who noticed his preoccupation and guessed the cause of it, told him, laughingly, to make sure of

his happiness with all haste. When he laughed at the warning—"

"When the young man laughed?"

"Of course; then his friend told him that he had a dangerous rival. I still remember his words: 'Harry Vanderplant is after your girl in the hottest kind of way, and he is going to pop the question to her this very evening. I know it, because Harry always leaks. Take my advice, and get there in time.' It only made me laugh still more—"

"It made the young man laugh,"

she insisted.

"What's the use? It was I. I ridiculed my friend's fears, and asked him, mockingly, if he thought Harry was better liked than I. No, my friend admitted, Harry was behind; but the race was closer than I thought, and no one knew what might happen, if Harry got a first chance. His assurance began to annoy me:

"'Do you mean to say,' I asked him, 'that my girl, that any girl, might choose a man that was not loved by her, simply because he happened to propose ahead of the man she really loved?'

""Women are queer," he replied.
'They may be wildly in love with a man, and yet be capable of loving, or of making themselves think they love, another man at the same time. Though you are her first choice now, a trifle may change the whole situation.""

"The—idiot!" Mrs. Vanderplant remarked, with scornful emphasis.

"Well, I don't know," he remarked, gloomily.

"But I do!" she retorted.

Her outbreak surprised him and threw him out of the line of thought he had been pursuing. A new idea took hold of his mind, and made him gaze at her with knitted brows, as one trying to solve a difficult riddle. Soon, however, a toss of his head indicated that he had disposed summarily of what appeared to be only a foolish notion. He took up the broken thread of his story.

"I parted from my friend, unconvinced, but with a strange disquiet in my heart. His words kept ringing in my ears, and my mind wrestled with

the novel idea that some other man might be preferred by the girl, of whose love I had felt sure till then. The mere possibility of a choice between me and somebody else revolted me. One moment I scorned the thought of it, and longed for vengeance on the man who had dared to offer such an insult to my heart's love. And then, again, I quailed in abject fear, as a voice within me seemed to cry, 'But if, if——'

"And it was as if the girl herself had told me she was not certain of her own heart. Then unreasonable anger boiled within me, and I muttered, 'No,

no; it is for me to find out.'

"'Choice?' I asked myself; 'does any choice exist for me? Do I carry more than one image in my heart, ready to contemplate now this, now that one, and to compare each flaw and merit of both? Could that be called love at all, which was not so sure of itself that there could be no choice?'

"To many I must have seemed like a madman while I tramped up and down the streets, for I know that I often spoke aloud. My friend's words continued to ring in my ears all the time, until their truth began to appear unquestionable. 'What a farce!' I cried, at last—if aloud or merely in my thought I do not know. Could it be that my life's happiness, all that made life valuable to me at that moment, depended not on the love that filled her heart as it did mine, but on some chance happening that would give either to me or to some one else the advantage of precedence - on the breaking down of a cab or the treachery of a dropped banana-peel? Such thoughts as those soon dislodged all my former happy confidence, and left nothing but doubt in its place. And from this doubt came torture that was not to be endured."

She had grown pale, while listening to him. Her breath came and went quickly. Now she almost hissed:

"And all that for the sake of a med-

dler's loose tongue!"

He was sitting up very straight, with his hands resting on his knees. As he spoke, his words stumbled and trampled on one another, as if precipitated by a fear that he might be interrupted, before he had had time to give utterance to all that had weighed and preyed on his mind for nearly half a lifetime.

"And yet," he resumed, without even noticing her words, "when the first tumult had subsided, the doubt that disturbed me concerned less the final outcome than the immediate action to be decided on. My reason convinced me that I had no right or cause to question the good faith of the girl; but it could not dispose of a feeling, which had rooted itself in my heart, that, if I carried out my intention of proposing this day and was accepted, I should ever afterward be haunted, in weak moments, by the thought that maybe, after all, I had not been the first and only choice, but simply the first comer.

"The end of it was that I made up my mind not to call that night, as I had promised to do. It seemed so clear to me that, if her love were worthy of mine and worth having, it could not be imperiled by a single day's delay, or by the intervention of any other man. felt more and more strongly that, as I had been willing to eliminate every possibility but one, and to concentrate my whole energy on the realization of that one, so should there, to her, exist only one man. If there were others well, then she was not for me. as it might be to give up my cherished dream of happiness, it would be harder still to wake up later and find myself tied for life to a person who did not love me, and who, therefore, might easily come to hate me."

Her foot beat a succession of light taps on the ground. Her mouth curved downward scornfully.

"Oh, you wise men!" she said; "you are wonderful!"

He was lost in his own thoughts, and did not seem to listen.

"Tell me now," she began again, a moment later, "on your word of honor, were you from the very beginning so sure of your own feelings as you wished that poor girl to be of hers?"

"I—I don't know," he stammered.

"Yes, I think—no, perhaps not. There was a time, of course, when—"

"Indeed, there was a time! Did it then never occur to you that the young girl's mind might not have passed that period of initial uncertainty?—that, while it was already strongly inclined to one side, new events and new influences might still tip it over to the other side?"

"No," he replied, with conviction, because she would not have behaved then as she did to me the night before. And, besides, what happened later proved me right."

"Oh, much-bepraised man's logic!"

she cried.

you know-

"Why, that is logical enough," he pleaded.

She turned her eyes to the sky, without answering. Then she asked:

"Did you finish your story?"
"Yes—no; I walked the streets till long after midnight, and finally returned home, after having decided that my failure to keep the appointment should serve as a test of her love. The test—the next day I heard the news. Well,

"Which proves what a stupid, blundering—pardon me, but I must apply the word once more—idiot you were."

"Which, on the contrary, proves that I was right," he rejoined, rather stiffly.

"No, you were not," she contradicted him, passionately. "And I shall tell you why. First of all, young girls are so different from young men —their position in the struggle we call love-making is so different. They are ignorant of so many things—not only of facts, but of emotions and sensa-They do not possess the knowledge of life, which should enable them to look through the motives and characters of the men who flutter about Their very innocence breeds within them a timidity, that prevents them from becoming sufficiently intimate with a man to judge him. What they call judgment is guesswork only. sympathies are unreflected. Their love—why, I believe it does not happen in one case out of a hundred

that a young woman's love—that is, a feeling strong enough to be worthy of that name—is bestowed until after the marriage. Till then, she thinks that she is in love, while, in reality, she is only drifting along, moved by anything and everything but that which should be her single guide—a clear understanding of her own heart."

"But I was right," he reiterated, although with less assurance than before; "else, why were you in such a hurry to accept the other man?"

She folded together the parasol, which, till then, had formed a background to her face. The substitution of the rich blue of the sky made her

look still paler.

"If you could only comprehend what I went through that evening!" she said, dragging the words a little, while she poked in the sand with her parasol. "I also was happy up to a certain time, as I have already told you. I had no doubts, either. If you had said nothing at all, when you left the night before, everything would have gone on as formerly. But you had aroused expectations in me, the disappointment of which seemed doubly bitter because it hurt my vanity also. I am not merely defending myself—I am trying to explain. Young girls, you know, are not perfect beings; they have vanity—a great deal of vanity.

"As the hours passed by, and you did not come, I found myself on glowing The other man was there, all the time. I had thought of himperhaps—but never as of you—until then. My humiliation, my impatience and my anger, grew apace. What was, at first, a vague suspicion became a conviction, and took hold of me ever more firmly. It was, that you had just been having fun with me, using me as a pretty plaything, and throwing me away when the play threatened to take a serious turn. It was then that the new thought, the thought of the other man, first assumed definite shape and began to tempt me. That would be to show you how much you really mattered to me. Little fool that I was, I did not understand that by punishing another one may punish one's self ten times worse.

"But I did not take the fatal step until you had had your full chance. I went so far as to send a message to your sister, asking for you-under some excuse or another, which I do not recall now. The answer was that you had gone out early with friends, and no one knew where you were. I, too, formed a decision. I said that the midnight hour, if you had not appeared by then, should conclude all relations between you and me, and also settle my fate, once for all. It seems such an easy and proper thing, when one's blood is heated, to play one's own providence, with the help of a dicebox or a clock-hand.

"The other man, he who had come, was most eager to bring his errand to a conclusion, but I held him back cruelly, mercilessly, until the appointed moment should have arrived. I plagued him almost beyond his endurance. Each time he tried to corner me, I wriggled out into some new topic, until he looked as black as a storm-cloud. And yet, I think if it had not been for his extraordinary perseverance..."

He, between his teeth: "Curse it!"
"Beg pardon? Oh, I thought you said something. Well, in that manner I kept him and his question suspended in mid-air till the last echo of the stroke of twelve had died out, hoping and waiting all the time—"

"For what?" He reached out a hand, as if expecting that one of hers

would be placed in it.

"Don't mind what," she said, motioning the suppliant hand away. "Then I let him speak. When it was all over, he remarked, with just a touch of temper, that it was already long after midnight. At the same time, he expressed a mild desire to know why I had tormented him so long. There was another chance for—somebody. Had he gone a fraction of a step farther, had his tone been one shade more irritated, nobody knows what might have happened. But he

managed to remain within the danger limit. All I said to him was: 'Yes, it is after midnight, at last, and I do not wish you to propose to me on a Friday, darling.'"

"Darling!" He blew out the word,

as one blows away a feather.

"Yes, that was what I called him then, and what I called him for many years after that. I was a pretty good wife to him."

"I dare say."

"Don't sneer. It is the least a woman can do to a man on whom she

has practised a great deceit."

He sprang to his feet, with his face flushed, his eyes shining and his lips moving, as if in too great eagerness

for ordered speech.

"Yes, there are quite a number of people on the veranda and the lawns now." She turned in that direction. "Some have marine-glasses. It is a fine view from the hotel."

The man resumed his seat, and be-

gan to use his hat as a fan.

"Would you like my parasol?" she suggested. "I am not very warm."

"Deceit!" he repeated, in a more

quiet tone.

"Deceit, indeed." Her voice was perfectly calm. Her features were serene, her bearing grave. "Perhaps, you have a certain right to know it. I respected and admired and liked that man, but in my heart I never—Sit still, Francis!"

"Millie!" was all he could utter.

"Shall I go for a glass of water?"
He stooped over, with his head buried in his hands. A few times, he rocked back and forth as if in pain. Finally, he muttered, under his breath:

"And all these long years—"

"Wasted!" she said, quietly;

"wasted because a slip of a girl was too proud, and a young man tried to go by principles where his feelings ought to have been uppermost; wasted because I did not know what marriage implied, nor you what love was; wasted because you played so cruelly with your own happiness—" very softly—"and with mine, Francis."

He had gathered himself together. Only his eyes showed signs of the fire that was burning within him.

"It is 'Francis' now?" he asked, leaning over toward her, but not com-

ing too close.

"Yes, and 'Millie.' Why should it not be so between old, old enemies who have made their peace?"

"And more?"

"What more?"

"The future!"

He arose, and she followed his example, more slowly. Giving her hand to him, which he took between both of his, she said:

"Who knows, Francis? Sufficient unto the day be the story thereof. We have told and heard long and interesting tales to-day. Don't let us crowd too much within the narrow confines of a single day; let us not repeat the mistake of making a single day the arbiter of all the years that are to follow. The future—we'll leave it to some other morning—not very distant; not to-morrow, exactly. You are going to stay here, are you not? And now—I am hungry."

He stood still, looking at her hand, as he had done when they first met.

"I know now," he exclaimed, sud-

denly. "White hyacinth."

Then he bent down over the little hand, that lay so quietly in his own, and kissed it softly, reverently. And she let him do it.

æ

IS her social position an assured one?"

"I should say so! Why, it's bounded on the north by two generations of scandals, on the east by Newport, on the south by ten millions, and on the west by South Dakota."

"'TIS FOLLY TO BE WISE"

By Robert Bloom

BUT think what a shock it would be to your friends!"
"I am sorry for the friends," Wilkins answered, indifferently, "but this thing must be settled. I am in love with both of them, and how am I to know which to choose? To die is my only way out of it."

"That sounds very tragic." Ford crossed the room leisurely, and stirred the fire. Then his face suddenly grew serious. He stepped quickly back to where his friend lay stretched on the divan, lazily looking at death through

rings of cigarette-smoke.

"Now, look here, Wilkins; you don't really intend to do anything so silly. It is an absurd plan. Just let me state your imbecility to you plainly, and I believe you will give up making a fool of yourself."

Wilkins laughed. "You're rather harsh, but you, too, have already promised to be a fool; so be careful not

to hurt your own feelings."

"Well, here's a statement of the matter; see how you like it. say you are in love with Eleanor Stavor and Mollie Mullane, and you have rather a tender feeling for that nice little girl who lives in the big brown house. I'd like to ask what you know about love; but we'll talk about that another time. You think you are getting tired of living peacefully up here in these quiet rooms, with no one to bother you but another fellow, who likes to be left alone as well as you do yourself. You think your happiness now depends upon getting a home, with either Mollie or Eleanor, or, perhaps, the little girl of the big brown house, to sit up nights and cry

her eyes out, because you don't come home. It sounds jolly, doesn't it? Your way of attaining this earthly paradise is equally pleasant and unselfish."

"See here, Ford, that's not fair," pleaded Wilkins. He leaned over and picked up a photograph.

"She is a beauty. Look at her eyes, Ford; they're so big and

brown!"

"Yes; and the others are so big and blue," answered his companion, sympathetically. "But let me go on with your scheme. Your difficulty is this: You are too affectionate; you love not only one girl, but two, with the possibility of a third. Unfortunately, you can marry but one. Which shall it be? You think you can get out of your trouble by announcing that you are dead, and then you will discover which girl really loves you. Think how we shall feel, when you have to come back to life! And no girl will marry you after such a trick."

Wilkins made no immediate reply. He seemed stubbornly determined. "I can make that all right, afterward, if I find out that she really loves me. I can see that it won't be so pleasant for you, Ford, but there's no other way. I can't regularly propose, for there are two of them; and, if the first one accepted, there would be the other, whom I'd be regretting all my life."

"I promised to help you before I knew what tomfoolery you were planning, so I suppose I'll have to go through it. I hate to wear a long face all that time, during your illness—which we'll cut short—and the day of your death. Then, you will expect me to

make funeral arrangements, and send announcements to your friends, and receive their condolences. I'll be hanged if I cry for you! And then, after it is all over, you won't know any more than you did before. But go ahead, and hurry through it. I'll do my part."

"See here, Willie; the carrier just brought them. This one is pink, sweetly scented and carefully sealed. That doesn't look much like self-forgetful grief, does it? Let me read your friends' lamentations:

"'MY DEAR MR. FORD:

"'It shocked me greatly to hear of Mr. Wilkins's death. I feel the deepest sympathy for you; but it is only one like you, who knew his best qualities, who can fully appreciate the loss. Come to see me as soon as you are relieved of your painful duties.
"'Sincerely yours.

"'ELBANOR STAVOR.'"

Wilkins groaned, but Ford opened another note, and went on, relentlessly:

"'MY DEAR MR. FORD:

"The carriage is waiting for me, and I am already due at Mrs. Harwood's reception; but I must write just a word to tell you how grieved I was to hear of Mr. Wilkins's death. Surely, you will not disappoint me next week? I have my heart set on seeing you at my fancy-dress ball. Poor Mr. Wilkins! He was to have led the cotillion with me. It is very sad. You must come.

"'Very truly yours,
"'MARGARET MULLANE.'"

The chilling silence that followed the reading of the letters was broken by a knock at the door. Ford opened it, and received into his arms an enormous bouquet of white roses, without a card. Hurrying to the window, he saw a carriage driving down the avenue, toward the big brown house.



IF LOVE HAD WEARIED

IF Love had wearied of my house and me, And on a day had kissed me carelessly, And crossed my threshold like a homing guest, Why, I had laughed, and given jest for jest, And bade him speed where other pleasures be.

But I—I wrenched my hands from his hands free And mocked his prayers and eyes of misery; Yea, sent him from me whom I loved the best— If Love had wearied.

No other way there was; yet, oh, that he Had less reproachful eyes to turn and see,
And hands less clinging and a mouth less sweet!
O heart of mine, that follows his slow feet,
Parting, perchance, had held less cruelty—
If Love had wearied.

John Winwood.



CLARA—I am afraid I shall never learn to swim.

MAUD—Why not?

"He won't let go of me long enough."

THE INTRUDER

By Ethel Watts Mumford

THE dowager duchess sat, stiff and grim, amid the dimmed splendors of the great hall of the She was small, slender, aristocratic to the tips of her lean fingers. The poise of her head was haughty, the glance of her eye, save to her few equals, a scornful rebuff. The dowager duchess not only represented the ancient house of Vantôme, but came herself of a line that traced itself back to dim days of heroic legends—the Gleocs-Keral of Brittany. Now she awaited the coming of her only son, Germain Marie Claude Raoul, Duke of Villiers-Vantôme, and his parvenu bride.

Mellow chimes from the clock-tower of the Henry IV. wing rang out the hour-eleven. The sonorous music, beating softly through the wide halls, gathered mystery and depth as it reverberated from the Gothic arches of the chapel to drift in roaring cadence down the echoing corridors. dowager duchess shuddered. Only half an hour more, and the stately palace must acknowledge an upstart American as its mistress. As she gazed on the painted ornaments of the huge, hooded fireplace—the rampant stags of Vantôme-tears rose to her eyes, tears of humiliation and disappointment. Was it for this she had servilely labored since the death of her husband? She had administered the estate with a hand of iron, that its dwindling revenues might provide the hereditary luxury, that Raoul might appear in Paris in the state befitting his rank, might live as the Duke de Vantôme should live, and marry a woman whose quarterings should do honor to the princely parchments of his father's pedigree. She had cloistered herself to live to this end, and to command the loyalty of peasants, the grudging homage of neighboring chatelaines. She had lived rigidly by the old régime; but her son had succumbed to the new.

She had refused to attend his wedding, giving ill health as her excuse; had been represented by her gift alone, the famous Valois necklace—noblesse oblige; the gifts of the dowager duchess must be princely.

Slow color mounted to her ashen cheeks, at the recollection of the Marquise de Vaux's scornful congratulations.

"Ah, ma chère, I hear from Paris, Raoul is to make a great marriage, a dot of millions, they say—oh, but millions and millions and millions—made in pork!"

"Raoul does not need to consider money," the dowager duchess had answered, superbly mendacious; "the lands are intact." The marquise had winced, visibly. The estates of Vaux were mortgaged, neglected.

"Nor family, either, it would seem,"

the viper tongue had retorted.

"Yes, he has sufficient of that, also."
The dowager duchess had the better
of the encounter, yet the stab went

The flighty, beruffled occupants of Arques Forret had dared to call upon her, excusing the intrusion by their intimacy with the foreign fiancée. Fortunately, she had been able to crush them with the accumulated magnificence of the château and her own queenly demeanor.

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The sound of wheels aroused her

from painful reverie.

Subdued whisperings in the corridor warned her that the servants were collected to welcome the new chabronze-The ponderous, telaine. The softstudded doors swung wide. toned tapestries undulated along the walls. A breath of Autumn air, sad with the memories of fallen leaves, swept into the room.

She remained seated in her ancient. throne-like chair, before the fire, only turning her head slightly as her tall son hurried to her side. Silently, she extended the thin fingers heavy with rings.

"Be welcome, my son," she said, at

length.

He kissed the proffered hand.

"Madame, my mother—I present to

you my wife, Claire."

With stately grace she turned to "My son's wife should the intruder. be welcome to Vantôme."

The girl bowed gracefully, but the flush that mantled her cheeks revealed her sense of the grudging reception accorded her.

The dowager duchess regarded her daughter-in-law fixedly, noting every line of the frail, fashionably gowned figure, every detail of the small, oval face, with its wide-set, blue eyes, and crown of iridescent black hair. The girl shivered slightly.

"You are cold," the dowager duchess "Raoul, there is wine suggested. and cake upon the table. The Autumn

winds are chill."

"Thank you," said the bride, simply. "I am cold. I have only just recovered from a long illness, as perhaps you know."

My son has told me. You must be weary. Amélie will conduct you

to your apartments."

A gaunt woman, wearing the characteristic garb of Arles, appeared at the door as her name was spoken. With a sigh, half of weariness, half of relief, the Duchess Claire rose.

"Pardon my not accompanying you," the unforgiving voice went on; "I do not walk with ease." As the dowager spoke, she slightly lifted an

ebony cane.

"An accident in the hunting field," her son hastened to explain, with a "You would never slight laugh. imagine that my mother was once a most enthusiastic sportswoman, first in every boar hunt in the arrondissement, would you?"

The girl looked up with a quick wonder in her blue eyes. She knew little or nothing of the

régime.

Go and rest, Claire," her husband persisted, gently. "Remember, you are an invalid still. Amélie, see that she is well cared for."

The woman nodded, as her young mistress, with an inclination to the

others, passed before her.

"Pretty and presentable, is she not, madame, ma mère?" said the duke, playfully, anxiety piercing the

lightness of his tone.

His mother's eyes froze, her mouth set tight. "Pretty she is-presentable, never! The daughter of a parvenu, without race, without pride—pre-Not among your father's sentable?

people nor mine!"

"She's a sweet little girl," her son insisted, his brow darkening. dot will place us once more among the first houses of France." That he loved his wife sincerely, was the last reason he would have dreamed of putting forward. He dreaded his mother's ridicule.

"Better poverty! And this" with a sweeping gesture to the faded glories of the hall-"is not poverty; yet better the poverty of Gilles of the cross-roads, than a stain upon that!" She pointed bitterly to the shield and rampant stags of the carved mantel.

Raoul winced. "Do you love me, mother?" he asked, abruptly.

She turned to him. Her hard eyes

softened, her mouth relaxed. are my only son," she answered.

He leaned over her, solicitous, ten-"Then be kind to her—for my sake. Remember, she is young, very young. She has been ill, is only half recovered. If her father had not

been called back to America, we should have postponed the wedding till the new year. Don't make it hard for her!"

"It is not as your mother that I object to this marriage," she said, slowly, avoiding a direct answer to his request. "It is the widow of Duke Henri of Villiers-Vantôme who rebels, the last descendant of du Guesclin, of the Gleocs-Kerals, who weeps over this dishonor. I know it is useless. I know that in this age all that is thought of is money, all that gives position is extravagance. long to the relegated generation, with which honor and breeding is the only seal of superiority. I cannot accept this mésalliance as you would have me."

"She is a sick child, mother."

"She is an intruder in the house of your forefathers." The dowager duchess rose, leaning heavily upon her ebony cane. "Your hand, Raoul." He hastened to her assistance. "The gallery," she said, quietly.

They crossed the huge room slowly, her quick eyes flashing with pride unutterable upon the tattered banners, the shining trophies, the stands of armor; resting with loving recollection upon the vast Breton chests of carved wood, black with age, ponderous with Gothic locks, that had contained her marriage linens, heirlooms of the vast, rugged castle in which her early years had bloomed and waned.

Her son swung back the door to the passage, held the tapestry aside as she entered, and rejoined her, offering his arm.

The gallery was vast, long and narrow, one side a series of deep-set Gothic windows looking out upon terraces, where a sun-dial stared blankly at gray, Autumnal heavens, and mossy, marble rims confined dark spaces of water that reflected the deep green of huge hedges of trimmed box and cedar.

On the wall, facing the somber outlook, the portraits of the dead lords

of Vantôme, with their ladies, hung, row on row—belaced seigneurs and mincing dames, by Mesnard; stalwart, beruffled gentlemen, by Vandyke; a subtle, smiling Italian countess, pictured by da Vinci; a black-browed, Spanish infanta, by Murillo; a laughing demoiselle de Bourgogne, by Rubens, and many more. Not one of all that pictured gathering but bore, either upon the masterly canvas, or its convoluted frame, the arms and tokens of heraldic fame—not one.

The dowager duchess made no comment. The duke understood; yet he persisted in his attempt to break down the barriers of caste. As they reëntered the great hall, he turned to her once more.

"Madame, ma mère, you will go to her soon; will you not? Make some excuse—anything. Be gentle with her, make her feel at home. You were once a bride. You know what it must be to come among strange faces and surroundings. Besides, she is not even of our country—think how alone she is! Mother, forget you are a Vantôme—remember you are a woman!"

They paused a moment by the huge centre-table with its weight of treasures—massive silver candlesticks, enamel boxes, the great horn of carved ivory, gift of Mazarin to Duke Jean IV., the bowl of priceless d'Oiron faience, the work of the Countess Hélène herself. The eyes of the dowager duchess rested upon a casket of wrought steel. A strange look flitted across her pale, set face, a look at once of horror and fanaticism.

"Is this woman a heretic?" she asked, turning suddenly.

"She is a Protestant, madame, ma mère. We were married by special dispensation. I have no doubt," he added, grasping at this straw of hope, "that, if you will gain her confidence, you can win her to the Church."

She shook her head. "If she has not recanted for your sake, she will not for mine," she answered, coldly.

The strange look deepened in her

old eyes, her thin, claw-like fingers played nervously with the hasps of steel. There was a moment's silence.

"Leave me now, Raoul," she said, slowly; "I wish to be alone. Later, I shall go to see your wife. She seems not well—I shall do for her what seems necessary."

The duke's face lighted up, joyously. "You are good, madame, ma mère. I knew, in the end, you would accept her for my sake."

"For your sake I shall do much.

May God forgive me!"

He raised her unresisting hand to his lips. She seemed not to notice it, her head was sunk upon her breast, her eyes fixed upon the foliated lock.

"I leave you, then, madame, ma

mère."

She nodded, absently.

Once alone, she glanced up, quickly, casting a look almost furtive about the silent room. Helmets gleamed in the subdued light. Omphale and Hercules stared out unseeing from the tapestry, the gargoyles of the carved beams grimaced, unobservant.

"None can ever guess," said the dowager duchess, slowly. She sought at her side the silver chatelaine with its trousseau of keys, which had been worn for generations by the ladies of Vantôme. She fitted and turned the key in the ancient box, threw back the lid, and looked within. There lay various packets wrapped in soft silk; one, larger and flatter than the others, she withdrew daintily. A yellowed slip of paper bore characters in old French: "The gloves of Catharine de' Medici, Queen of France, wife of Charles IX., given by her to Jeanne de Gae, second wife of Michael de Vantôme. These gloves were poisoned by Conotelli, the celebrated alchemist, who accompanied Catharine when, as Princess of Florence, she was married to the son of Francis I. To put one on is said to be certain and painless death, leaving no trace whatsoever. The secret, which belonged originally to the Borgias, died with the physician of the great Catharine."

She folded the slip, concealing it in her bosom.

A few moments later, the dowager duchess requested admittance to the presence of the new mistress of the manor.

Claire shivered slightly, as she lay on the great carved bed with its hangings of embroidered Genoese velvet, and, drawing her lacy négligée about her, struggled to a sitting position. "If she will pardon—will pardon—!" she stammered. The slow tap of the ebony cane and the heavy step outside her door made her tremble anew. In her weakness, she feared this haughty woman of ice and iron, as she had feared no one else in her life. She longed for the comforting presence of her husband, but it would be best to receive his mother at once.

Amélie flew to the door. The dowager duchess dropped the arm of the man-servant who escorted her, and leaned her weight upon the faithful Arlésienne.

"Pierre, bring the steel casket from the table in the tapestry hall—now, at once." The cane tapped impatiently. Turning, the dowager advanced slowly toward the bed.

Claire gazed, fascinated; she strove to rise, but sank back as, with a wave of her hand, her stately visitor directed. Amélie placed a chair for her mistress, taking up her position behind it.

"The casket for which I have sent contains some heirlooms. They should have formed a part of my wedding gift, but I preferred to wait till you came to place them in your keeping. In your country, perhaps, they do not value such things."

"Oh, yes, indeed we do," cried the girl. "You don't know how I love this wonderful place and all the beautiful things. Please don't think we Americans have so little appreciation——"

She broke off, tremulous, uncertain. Something in the inflexibility of the stern mouth before her, in the concentrated fire of the dark eyes that burned into hers, made her feel

strangely apprehensive. To her overwrought nerves, the woman before her seemed a terrible incarnation of some bird of prey, with curving beak and lean, unmerciful talons, herself its

weak and fluttering quarry.

"Many of these things—trifles, some of them—were gifts or souvenirs of the great men and women who have honored Vantôme with their presence," the duchess went on. "Raoul never has taken the interest in these matters that he should. Half of these trophies he has never seen, nor has he ever cared to inquire into their history when he has been shown them. Yet, as chatelaine, you must guard and care for them."

"You honor me, madame," said the Duchess Claire.

A knock at the door interrupted them. The gaunt servant received the casket, and, placing it on the bed, was dismissed.

The older woman opened the box painfully; the lock was stiff and complicated; her jeweled fingers trembled.

plicated; her jeweled fingers trembled.
"This," she said, reverently, opening a tattered velvet case of almost unrecognizable blue, "is the marshal's baton of Angoulème, and this, the

ring of Cardinal Richelieu."

Claire sat up, her eyes wide, her breath coming quick. "How wonderful!" she murmured. The ring of Richelieu!—a huge, engraved amethyst, set in heavy gold. She slipped the band upon her finger, turning it over and over with awe.

"This is the tambour and part of the embroidery, just as she left it, made by Anne of Brittany during her brief stay in Normandy. She occupied the turret apartments in the old wing."

"Here?" asked Claire, under her

"Here," said the dowager duchess.
"This pin belonged to Mary Stuart,
the Scottish princess, when she was
the wife of the dauphin of France.
These were her rooms—this is the bed
she slept in."

Claire's eyes traveled in bewilderment over the huge, dark pillars, the red and tarnished gold of the hangings. "Mary Queen of Scots!" she murmured. "This—this is all like a dream, a sort of fairy story. I—I can't realize——"

The older woman smiled, contemptuously. "Here is the snuff-box my lord of Buckingham presented, when he was envoy from England at the court of Louis XV. The fan was the Montespan's; this star, the gift of Louis XIV. to Duke John—the royal party occupied Ventôme during the Autumn hunts; that dagger Diane de Poitiers wore to the chase—see the entwined crescents on the guard and the leaping stag upon the hilt. But, perhaps, I weary you."

"No, no!" cried the Duchess Claire. "This is all fairyland, too good to be true. I shall wake up—I know I

shall!"

"Here is a diamond shoe-buckle of La Pompadour's. The reliquaire was made by Benvenuto Cellini to the order of Cardinal Vantôme." The claw fingers touched the last packet, fearfully. There was a pause, the bright eyes clouded. A spasm contracted the grim mouth, leaving it livid and determined.

The Duchess Claire gave no heed. With reverent fingers, she turned and re-turned the golden reliquary, with its garlands and sculptured saints, wondering, dreaming. All these treasures, hers! treasures heavy with the weight of centuries—actual, tangible links in the great human chain of history, bringing the past here to her hands—hands born and grown in that far, new world, where the wheel of Fortune whirled a hundred years of concentrated living into as many days. Something of the awe of mighty heights and depths grew in her soul, leaving her shrinking upon the brink of eternities of time and life. She raised her eyes to the face of the woman beside her. It was white as death itself, and as cold.

"These," said the dowager duchess, bending low over the packet in her lap, "are the gloves of Queen Catharine de' Medici. They were embroidered for the wife of Duke Michael. They have never been worn—look, how soft and flexible they are after all these years."

The Duchess Claire took the gloves,

silently.

"How sweet they smell," she said, softly, raising them to her face, breathing the strange, dim fragrance they exhaled. "What is it? It's like nothing that I know—it seems hardly of earth."

"Put one on your hand for a few moments." The dowager duchess looked away, her eyes fixed on the ivory-and-silver crucifix upon the wall. "Your hand will retain the perfume, so they say, for a long, long time. It was a secret, the property of Catharine's court physician, and it died with him."

The girl obeyed, gently pulling on the embroidered gauntlet, preserved almost miraculously, its texture still flexible and fine, its golden flowers still whole, though brown with age.

"See how it fits!" she exclaimed.
"It might have been made for me instead of for the wife of Duke

Michael."

"Jean wishes to know at what hour you wish the dejeuner." The Ar-

lésienne stood at the door.

"When the duke is ready," said the dowager duchess. Then, turning to her daughter-in-law: "Don't try to come down. Stay and take your rest. Amélie will serve you here, and Raoul shall come to you afterward. Let us put back your treasures now."

One by one, the storied relics were returned to their places, folded, enwrapped, encased many times, the girl stripping the gauntlet from her hand, reluctantly, and the gloves of the Florentine disappeared from the light of day to their steel prison.

With a sigh, the bride leaned back among her pillows. "I am so sleepy!" she murmured.

The dowager duchess rose with the help of her ebony cane, standing above the girl, a dark, brooding shadow.

"My daughter," she said—there was something tense and terrible in her tone—"my daughter, you will forgive me, if I have dealt hardly with you. Remember, I have but one son, and for him I have wished only the greatest and best the world had to give. I am the descendant of the kings of Brittany; my husband came from the lords of the Norman conqueror. When the hour comes that I must be judged, remember this. Forgive what seemed cruel."

The Duchess Claire sought to open her eyes, sought to make reply. Her lips repeated, mechanically, "What seemed cruel—forgive—" and, with a little sigh, like a tired child, she turned on her pillows, and fell asleep. Her face grew yellow-white as wax, her breathing difficult. How black seemed her hair on the white pillow!

Slowly, the dowager duchess crossed the room; slowly, the sound of her ebony cane and dragging footfall sounded down the echoing corridor. She found her way, unaided, to the wide hall, where the banners hung in tattered glory, where the shining arms of forgotten heroes gleamed in martial array.

There, in her great throne-chair, she sat down, her heart dead within her shrunken breast.

"No one will ever know," murmured the dowager duchess. "My son's sons have been spared a low-born mother—God rest her soul!"



QUITE DIFFERENT

FLORA—Is it true that Mr. Lyttlebragne is worth a lot of money? DORA—Er—well—he has a lot of money.

A COLLEGE SANTA CLAUS

By Ralph Henry Barbour

ATHERWAITE, 'o2, threw his overcoat across the broad mahogany table, regardless of the silver and cutglass furnishings, shook the melting snowflakes from his cap and tossed it atop the coat, half kicked, half shoved a big leathern arm-chair up to the wide fireplace, dropped himself into it, and stared moodily at the flames.

Satherwaite was troubled. In fact, he assured himself, drawing his handsome features into a generous scowl, that he was, on this Christmas eve, the most depressed and bored person in the length and breadth of New England. Satherwaite was not used to being depressed, and boredom was a state usually far remote from his experience; consequently, he took it With something between a groan and a growl, he drew a crumpled telegram from his pocket. The telegram was at the bottom of it all. He read it again:

R. Satherwaite, Randolph Hall, Cambridge.

Advise your not coming. Aunt Louise very ill. Merry Christmas.

PHIL.

"'Merry Christmas!" growled Satherwaite, throwing the offending sheet of buff paper into the flames. "Looks like it, doesn't it? Confound Phil's Aunt Louise, anyway! What business has she getting sick at Christmas time? Not, of course, that I wish the old lady any harm, but it—it—well, it's wretched luck."

When at college, Phil was the occupant of the bedroom that lay in darkness beyond the half-opened door to the right. He lived, when at home, in a big, rambling house in the Berkshires, a house from the windows of which one could see into three states and overlook a wonderful expanse of wooded hill and sloping meadow; a house which held, beside Phil, and Phil's father and mother and Aunt Louise and a younger brother, Phil's sister. Satherwaite growled again, more savagely, at the thought of Phil's sister; not, be it understood, at that extremely attractive young lady, but at the fate which was keeping her from his sight.

Satherwaite had promised his roommate to spend Christmas with him, thereby bringing upon himself pained remonstrances from his own family, remonstrances which, Satherwaite acknowledged, were quite justifiable. His bags stood beside the door. He had spent the early afternoon very pleasurably in packing them, carefully weighing the respective merits of a primrose waistcoat and a blue flannel one, as weapons wherewith to impress the heart of Phil's sister. And now——!

He kicked forth his feet, and brought brass tongs and shovel clattering on the hearth. It relieved his exasper-

The fatal telegram had reached him at five o'clock, as he was on the point of donning his coat. From five to six, he had remained in a torpor of disappointment, smoking pipe after pipe, and continually wondering whether Phil's sister would care. At six, his own boarding-house being closed for the recess, he had trudged through the snow to a restaurant in the square, and had dined miserably

on lukewarm turkey and lumpy mashed potatoes. And now it was nearly eight, and he did not even care to smoke. His one chance of reaching his own home that night had passed, and there was nothing for it but to get through the interminable evening somehow, and catch an early train in the morning. The theatres in town offered no attraction. As for his club, he had stopped in on his way from dinner, and had fussed with an evening paper, until the untenanted expanse of darkly-furnished apartments and the unaccustomed stillness had driven him forth again.

He drew his long legs under him, and arose, crossing the room and drawing aside the deep-toned hangings before the window. It was still snowing. Across the avenue, a flood of mellow light from a butcher's shop was thrown out over the snowy side-Its windows were garlanded walk. with Christmas greens and hung with pathetic-looking turkeys and geese. Belated shoppers passed out, their arms piled high with bundles. A car swept by, its drone muffled by the snow. The spirit of Christmas was Satherwaite's dein the very air. pression increased and, of a sudden, inaction became intolerable. would go and see somebody, anybody, and make them talk to him; but, when he had his coat in his hands, he realized that even this comfort was denied him. He had friends in town, nice folk who would be glad to see him any other time, but into whose family gatherings he could no more force himself to-night than he could steal. As for the men he knew in college, they had all gone to their homes or to those of somebody else.

Staring disconsolately about the study, it suddenly struck him that the room looked disgustingly slovenly and unkempt. Phil was such an untidy beggar! He would fix things up a bit. If he did it carefully and methodically, no doubt he could consume a good hour and a half that way. It would then be half-past nine. Possibly, if he tried hard, he could use up

another hour bathing and getting ready for bed. And at half-past ten lots of fellows went to sleep. He could not remember having done so himself of late years, but he could try it; and, if he succeeded, it would be a good joke to tell Phil—confound him!

As a first step, he removed his coat from the table, and laid it carefully across the foot of the leather couch. Then he placed his damp cap on one end of the mantel. The next object to meet his gaze was a well-worn note-It was not his own, and it did not look like Phil's. The mystery was solved when he opened it and read, "H. G. Doyle-College House," on the fly-leaf. He remembered then. He had borrowed it from Doyle almost a week before, at a lecture. He had copied some of the notes, and had forgotten to return the book. It was very careless of him; he would return it as soon as— Then he recollected having seen Doyle at noon that day, coming from one of the cheaper boarding-houses. It was probable that Doyle was spending recess at college. Just the thing—he would call on Doyle!

It was not until he was half-way down-stairs that he remembered the book. He went back for it, two steps at a time. Out in the street, with the fluffy flakes against his face, he felt better. After all, there was no use in getting grouchy over his disappointment; Phil would keep; and so would Phil's sister, at least until Easter; or, better yet, he would get Phil to take him home with him over Sunday some time. He was passing the shops now, and stopped before a jeweler's window, his eve caught by a rather jolly-looking paperknife in gun-metal. He had made his purchases for Christmas and had already despatched them, but the paper-knife looked attractive and, if there was no one to give it to, he could keep it himself. So he passed into the shop, and purchased it.

"Put it into a box, will you?" he requested. "I may want to send it away."

Out on the avenue again, his thoughts reverted to his prospective host. The visit had elements of humor. He had known Doyle at preparatory school, and since then, at college, had maintained the acquaintance in a casual way. He liked Doyle, always had, just as any man must like an honest, earnest, gentlemanly fellow, whether paths run parallel or cross only at rare intervals. He and Doyle were not at all in the same coterie. Satherwaite's friends were the richest, and sometimes the laziest, men in college; Doyle's were—well, presumably men who, like himself, had only enough money to scrape through from September to June, who studied hard degrees, whose viewpoint of university life must, of necessity, be widely separated from Satherwaite's. As for visiting Doyle, Satherwaite could not remember ever having been in his room but once, and that was long ago, in their Freshman year.

Satherwaite had to climb two flights of steep and very narrow stairs, and when he stood at Doyle's door, he thought he must have made a mistake. From within came the sounds of very unstudious revelry, laughter, a snatch of song, voices raised in good-natured argument. Satherwaite referred again to the fly-leaf of the note-book; there was no error. He knocked and, in obedience to a cheery, "Come in!" entered.

He found himself in a small study, shabbily furnished, but cheerful and homelike by reason of the leaping flames in the grate and the blue haze of tobacco-smoke, that almost hid its farther wall. About the room sat six men, their pipes held questioningly away from their mouths and their fixed wonderingly, half-resentfully, upon the intruder. what caught and held Satherwaite's gaze was a tiny Christmas tree, scarcely three feet high, which adorned the centre of the desk. Its branches held toy candles, as yet unlighted, and were festooned with strings of crimson cranberries and colored popcorn, while here and there a small package dangled amid the greenery.

"How are you, Satherwaite?"

Doyle, tall, lank and near-sighted, arose and moved forward, with outstretched hand. He was plainly embarrassed, as was every other occupant of the study, Satherwaite included. The laughter and talk had subsided. Doyle's guests politely removed their gaze from the newcomer, and returned their pipes to their lips. But the new-comer was intruding, and knew it, and he was consequently embarrassed. Embarrassment, like boredom, was a novel sensation to him, and he speedily decided that he did not fancy it. He held out Doyle's book.

"I brought this back, old man. I don't know how I came to forget it. I'm awfully sorry, you know; it was so very decent of you to lend it to me. Awfully sorry, really."

Doyle murmured that it didn't matter, not a particle; and wouldn't Satherwaite sit down?

No, Satherwaite couldn't stop. He heard the youth in the faded cricket-blazer tell the man next to him, in a stage aside, that this was, "Satherwaite, '02, an awful swell, you know." Satherwaite again declared that he could not remain.

Doyle said he was sorry; they were just having a little—a sort of a Christmas-eve party, you know. He blushed while he explained, and wondered whether Satherwaite thought them a lot of idiots, or simply a parcel of sentimental kids. Probably, Satherwaite knew some of the fellows? he went on.

Satherwaite studied the assemblage, and replied that he thought not, though he remembered having seen several of them at lectures and things. Doyle made no move toward introducing his friends to Satherwaite, and, to relieve the momentary silence that followed, observed that he supposed it was getting colder. Satherwaite replied, absently, that he hadn't noticed, but that it was still snowing. The youth in the cricket-blazer fid-

geted in his chair. Satherwaite was thinking.

Of course, he was not wanted there; he realized that. Yet, he was of half a mind to stay. The thought half a mind to stay. of his empty room dismayed him. The cheer and comfort before him appealed to him forcibly. And, more than all, he was possessed of a desire to vindicate himself to this circle narrow-minded critics. of Scott! just because he had some money and went with some other fellows who also had money, he was to be promptly labeled "cad," and treated with polite tolerance only. By Jove, he would stay, if only to punish them for their narrowness!

"You're sure I sha'n't be intruding,

Doyle?" he asked.

Doyle gasped in amazement. Satherwaite removed his coat. A shiver of consternation passed through the room. Then the host found his tongue.

"Glad to have you. Nothing much doing. Few friends. Quiet evening.

Let me take your coat."

Introductions followed. The man in the cricket-blazer turned out to be Doak, '03, the man who had won the Jonas Greeve scholarship; a small youth with eagle-like countenance was Somers, he who had debated so brilliantly against Princeton; a muchbewhiskered man was Ailworth, of the Law School: Kranch and Smith. both members of Satherwaite's class, completed the party. Satherwaite shook hands with those within reach, and looked for a chair. Instantly, every one was on his feet; there was a confused chorus of, "Take this, won't you?" Satherwaite accepted a straight-backed chair with part of its cane seat missing, after a decent amount of protest; then a heavy, discouraging silence fell. Satherwaite looked around the circle. one save Ailworth and Doyle was staring blankly at the fire. worth dropped his eyes, gravely; Doyle broke out explosively with:

"Do you smoke, Satherwaite?"
"Yes, but I'm afraid—"he searched

his pockets, perfunctorily—"I haven't my pipe with me." His cigarettecase met his searching fingers, but somehow cigarettes did not seem appropriate.

"I'm sorry," said Doyle, "but I'm afraid I haven't an extra one. Any of you fellows got a pipe that's not

working?"

Murmured regrets followed. Doak, who sat next to Satherwaite, put a hand in his coat pocket, and viewed the intruder doubtingly, from around the corners of his glasses.

"It doesn't matter a bit," remarked

Satherwaite, heartily.

"I've got a sort of a pipe here," said Doak, "if you're not over particular

what you smoke."

Satherwaite received the pipe gravely. It was a blackened briar, whose bowl was burned half-way down on one side, from being lighted over the gas, and whose mouthpiece, gnawed away in long usage, had been re-shaped with a knife. Satherwaite examined it with interest, rubbing the bowl gently on his knee. He knew, without seeing, that Doak was eying him with mingled defiance and apology, and wondering in what manner a man who was used to meerschaums and gold-mounted briars would take the proffer of his worn-out favorite; and he knew, too, that all the others were watching. He placed the stem between his lips, and drew on it once or twice, with satisfaction.

"It seems a jolly old pipe," he said; "I fancy you must be rather fond of it. Has any one got any 'baccy?"

Five pouches were tendered in-

stantly.

Satherwaite filled his pipe, carefully. He had won the first trick, he told himself, and the thought was pleasurable. The conversation had started up again, but it was yet perfunctory, and Satherwaite realized that he was still an outsider. Doyle gave him the opportunity he wanted.

"Isn't it something new for you to stay here through recess?" he asked.

Then Satherwaite told about Phil's Aunt Louise and the telegram; about

his dismal dinner at the restaurant and the subsequent flight from the tomblike silence of the club; how he had decided, in desperation, to clean up his study, and how he had come across Doyle's note-book. He told it rather well; he had a reputation for that sort of thing, and to-night he did his best. He pictured himself to his audience on the verge of suicide from melancholia, and assured them that this fate had been averted only through his dislike of being found lifeless amid such untidy surroundings. He decked the narrative with touches of drollery, and was rewarded with the grins that overspread the faces of his hearers. worth nodded appreciatingly, now and then, and Doak even slapped his knee once and giggled aloud. Satherwaite left out all mention of Phil's sister, naturally, and ended with:

"And so, when I saw you fellows having such a Christian, comfortable sort of a time, I simply couldn't break away again. I knew I was risking getting myself heartily disliked, and, really, I wouldn't blame you if you arose en masse and kicked me out. But I am desperate. Give me some tobacco from time to time, and just let me sit here and listen to you; it will be a kindly act to a homeless orphan."

"Shut up!" said Doyle, heartily; "we're glad to have you, of course." The others concurred. "We—we're going to light up the tree after a bit. We do it every year, you know. It's kind of—of Christmassy when you don't get home for the holidays, you see. We give one another little presents and—and have rather a bit of fun out of it. Only—"he hesitated, doubtfully—"only, I'm afraid it may bore you awfully."

"Bore me!" cried Satherwaite; "why, man alive, I should think it would be the jolliest sort of a thing. It's just like being boys again." He turned and observed the tiny tree with interest. "And do you mean that you all give one another presents, and keep it secret, and—and all that?"

"Yes; just little things, you know," answered Doak, deprecatingly.

"It's the nearest thing to a real Christmas that I've known for seven years," said Ailworth, gravely. Satherwaite observed him, wonderingly.

"By Jove!" he murmured; "seven years! Do you know, I'm glad now I am going home, instead of to Sterner's for Christmas. A fellow ought to be with his own folks, don't you think?"

Everybody said, yes, heartily, and there was a moment of silence in the room. Presently, Kranch, whose home was in Michigan, began speaking reminiscently of the Christmases he had spent when a lad in the pine woods. He made the others feel the cold and the magnitude of the pictures he drew, and, for a space, Satherwaite was transported to a little lumber town in a clearing, and stood by excitedly, while a small boy in jeans drew woolen mittens—wonderful ones of red and gray—from out a Christmas stocking. And Somers told of a Christmas he had once spent in a Quebec village; and Ailworth followed him with an account of Christmas morning in a Maine-coast fishing town.

Satherwaite was silent. He had no Christmases of his own to tell about; they would have been sorry, indeed, after the others; Christmases in a big Philadelphia house, rather staid and stupid days, as he remembered them now, days lacking in any delightful element of uncertainty, but filled with wonderful presents so numerous that the novelty had worn away from them ere bedtime. He felt that, somehow, he had been cheated out of a pleasure which should have been his.

The tobacco-pouches went from hand to hand. Christmas-giving had already begun; and Satherwaite, to avoid disappointing his new friends, had to smoke many more pipes than was good for him. Suddenly, they found themselves in darkness, save for the firelight. Doyle had arisen stealthily and turned out the gas. Then, one by one, the tiny candles flickered and flared bluely into flame. Some one pulled the shades from before the two windows, and the room was hushed. Outside, they could see the flakes falling,

silently, steadily, between them and the electric lights that shone across the avenue. It was a beautiful, cold, still world of blue mists. A gong clanged softly, and a car, well-nigh untenanted, slid by beneath them, its windows, frosted half-way up, flooding the snow with mellow light. Some one beside Satherwaite murmured, gently:

"Good old Christmas!"

The spell was broken. Satherwaite sighed—why, he hardly knew—and turned away from the window. The tree was brilliantly lighted now, and the strings of cranberries caught the beams ruddily. Doak stirred the fire, and Doyle, turning from a whispered consultation with some of the others, approached Satherwaite.

"Would you mind playing Santa Claus—give out the presents, you know; we always do it that way."

Satherwaite would be delighted; and, better to impersonate that famous old gentleman, he turned up the collar of his jacket, and put each hand up the opposite sleeve, looking as benignant as possible the while.

"That's fine!" cried Smith; "but

hold on, you need a cap."

He seized one from the window-seat, a worn thing of yellowish-brown otter, and drew it down over Satherwaite's ears. The crowd applauded, merrily.

"Dear little boys and girls," began Satherwaite, in a quavering voice.

"No girls!" cried Doak.

"I want the cranberries!" cried Smith; "I love cranberries."

"I get the pop-corn, then!" That was the sedate Ailworth.

"You'll be beastly sick," said Doak, grinning jovially through his glasses.

Satherwaite untied the first package from its twig. It bore the inscription, "For Little Willie Kranch." Every one gathered around while the recipient undid the wrappings, and laid bare a pen-wiper adorned with a tiny crimson football. Doak explained to Satherwaite that Kranch had played football just once, on a scrub team, and had heroically carried the ball down a long field, and placed it triumphantly

under his own goal posts. This accounted for the laughter that ensued.

"Sammy Doak" received a notebook marked, "Mathematics 3a." The point of this allusion was lost to Satherwaite, for Doak was too busy laughing to explain it. And so it went, and the room was in a constant roar of mirth. Doyle was conferring excitedly with Ailworth across the By-and-bye, he stole forward, and, detaching one of the packages from the tree, erased and wrote on it with great secrecy. Then he tied it back again, and retired to the hearth, grinning expectantly, until his own name was called, and he was shoved forward to receive a rubber pen-holder.

Presently, Satherwaite, working around the Christmas tree, detached a package, and frowned over the ad-

dress

"Fellows, this looks like—like Satherwaite, but—" he viewed the assemblage in embarrassment—"but I fancy it's a mistake."

"Not a bit," cried Doyle; "that's

just my writing."

"Open it!" cried the others, throng-

ing up to him.

Satherwaite obeyed, wondering. Within the wrappers was a pocket memorandum book, a simple thing of cheap red leather. Some one laughed, uncertainly. Satherwaite, very red, ran his finger over the edges of the leaves, examined it long, as though he had never seen anything like it before, and placed it in his waistcoat pocket.

"I—I—" he began.

"Chop it off!" cried some one, joyously.

"I'm awfully much obliged to-to

whoever---

"It's from the gang," said Doyle.
"With a Merry Christmas," said
Ailworth.

"Thank you—gang," said Satherwaite.

The distribution went on, but presently, when all the rest were crowding about Somers, Satherwaite whipped a package from his pocket and, writing on it hurriedly, was apparently in the

act of taking it from the tree, when the others turned again.

"'Little Harry Doyle,'" he read,

gravely.

Doyle viewed the package in amazement. He had dressed the tree himself.

"Open it up, old man!"

When he saw the gun-metal paperknife, he glanced quickly at Satherwaite. He was very red in the face. Satherwaite smiled back, imperturbably. The knife went from hand to hand, awakening enthusiastic admiration.

"But, I say, old man, who gave—?"

began Smith.

"I'm awfully much obliged, Satherwaite," said Doyle, "but, really, I

couldn't think of taking-

"Chop it off!" echoed Satherwaite. "Look here, Doyle, it isn't the sort of thing I'd give you from choice; it's a useless sort of toy, but I just happened to have it with me; bought it in the square on the way to give to some one, I didn't know who, and so, if you don't mind, I wish you'd accept it, you know. It'll do to put on the table or—open cans with. If you'd rather not take it, why, chuck it out of the window!"

"It isn't that," cried Doyle; "it's only that it's much too fine-

"Oh, no, it isn't," said Satherwaite. "Now, then, where's 'Little Alfie Ailworth'?"

Small candy canes followed the packages, and the men drew once more around the hearth, munching the pink and white confectionery, enjoyingly. Smith insisted upon having the cranberries, and wore them around his The pop-corn was distributed equally, and the next day, in the parlor-car Satherwaite drew his from a pocket together with his handkerchief.

Some one struck up a song, and Doyle remembered that Satherwaite had been in the Glee Club. There was an instant clamor for a song, and Satherwaite, consenting, looked about the

room.

"Haven't any thump-box," said Smith. "Can't you go it alone?"

Satherwaite thought he could, and did. He had a rich tenor voice, and he sang all the songs he knew. it could be done, by hook or by crook, the others joined in the chorus; not too loudly, for it was getting late and proctors have sharp ears. When the last refrain had been repeated for the third time, and silence reigned for the moment, they heard the bell in the near-by tower. They counted its strokes: eight—nine—ten—eleven twelve.

"Merry Christmas, all!" cried Smith.

In the clamor that ensued, Satherwaite secured his coat and hat. shook hands all around. Smith insisted upon sharing the cranberries with him, and so looped a string gracefully about his neck. Satherwaite backed out the door, he still held Doak's pet pipe clenched between his teeth, and Doak, knowing it, said not a word.

"Hope you'll come back and see

us," called Doyle.
"That's right, old man, don't for-

get us!" shouted Ailworth.

And Satherwaite, promising again and again not to, stumbled his way down the dark stairs.

Outside, he glanced gratefully up at the lighted panes. Then he grinned, and, scooping a handful of snow, sent it fairly against the glass. Instantly, the windows banged up, and six heads thrust themselves out.

"Good night! Merry Christmas, old

man! Happy New Year!"

Something smashed softly against Satherwaite's cheek. He looked back. They were gathering snow from the ledges and throwing snow-balls after

"Good shot!" he called. "Merry Christmas!"

The sound of their cries and laughter followed him far down the avenue.

FIRST VOLCANO—Judging by that island you made, you've been exercising SECOND VOLCANO—Oh, no; that was only a bluff.

FILLING THE STOCKING

YOU with a dainty foot,
You with a trim knee,
If it were not for soot
Choking the chimney,
Santa Claus I would be,
At your door knocking,
Asking just once to see
One silken stocking.

Under the mantel, where,
Doubtless, you pin it,
I should espy it there—
Not a thing in it;
Then, in the hush of night,
Mine it would be to
Fill it, and bring delight
To you—and me, too.

Roses and rhymes and rings
I have to put there,
Yet none of all these things
Could match your foot there.
Yours are poetic feet,
And, as for roses,
One in your stocking neat
Often reposes.

So let old Santa Claus
Stick to his duty;
I give it up—because
Chimneys are sooty.
Stockings he fills, I grant,
As but a few can;
But I am sure he can't
Fill yours as you can!

FELIX CARMEN.



THE BEST SHE COULD DO

HE—Could you marry a man who spends all he makes? SHE—No; but I could love him while it lasted.

COUNT OGURI'S QUEST

By Onoto Watanna

ESPITE his course at an American college, Count Oguri was pariah. temperamental While he desired keenly to live upon terms of social intimacy with many persons, and while, not infrequently, he himself had made advances, there was that in his manner tending to the ultimate overthrow of all such ambitions. There was a diffidence in his mental attitude that led, not only to an embarrassed manner, but gave, as well, the appearance and qualities of a marplot. Oguri had lain awake long to plan, in detail, some interview or meeting that was to bring him the friendship of Cullen, the full-back, or Wright, "the star debater," and, having settled the minutiæ of proper familiarity with his associates, had gone down to breakfast, only to ask for the salt in a tone of voice that instantly attracted to himself the full gaze of the tableful.

He could not analyze the situation lucidly enough to determine just why they stared; they themselves could not have told, but he and they both realized that there was a strained something in his voice to confound him and to startle them. Then, for days, he would refrain from asking for anything, the experience of the one occasion vitiating the resolution of a fortnight.

When Count Oguri had again fought himself up to the proper pitch of pitiful daring, he would attempt the interviews. But, at the slightest evidence in the individual of that collective stare over the salt incident, his courage would evaporate

into mere nervous giddiness. The incident would be reported duly by the sought-for one, and would take its place in the archives of accusation against the good-fellowship of Count Oguri.

Such was the temperamental impediment of Oguri, and, when it is added that he was a Japanese, the second element in the dissatisfaction that Oguri aroused is stated. Friends were kept away by his dispositional failing, as well as because of his nationality.

Then, too, the understanding of Count Oguri, while easily outstripping that of his contemporaries in the taking to itself of the principles and facts of sciences and languages, could not admit unto itself any comprehension of characteristic student customs.

When a group of sophomores entered the rooms of the "Jap Slimer," for the purpose of imparting to his "benighted Oriental understanding some slight compendium and illustrated appendix of the college custom of hazing," Oguri could not recognize his urgent need of it.

"My pagan friend," said a sophomore, "you must prove your ability as a 'Slimer,' by drinking this bottle of milk and singing that classical ditty, 'I'm a Pea-green Freshman."

The Japanese leaped to a pair of iron dumb-bells lying in a corner. "What you call this?" he shouted. "You call this civilization? I call it barbarism."

Then, without further words, Count Oguri attacked his enemies, swinging the iron objects with long reach, and with the earnest purpose of clearing the room, or of killing an enemy. He cleared the room.

After that, the sophomores let him alone, giving him up as one without a sense of humor. His classmates, however, discerning in this act a germ of class spirit, decided suddenly that they had misjudged the grim-featured Japanese. They called upon him in bodies. Again Oguri was afforded an opportunity of getting on with his fellows, but again did the shyness and diffidence of his disposition declare themselves his enemies. His classmates concluded that his act of bravado was animal instinct brought to bay, and not calculated class spirit. His own eagerly desirous personality had remained embarrassedly in the background. one discerned that he wished to be a good-fellow before everything, but could not show it.

College life has no toleration for the man who, as a freshman, cannot conform to its traditions, and to the unpopularity Oguri's temperament brought was added a measure of college displeasure. He was doubly cut off from his fellows' inner life; nevertheless, he did not think of leaving the college. He was bent upon becoming as American as possible, and this early failure did not deter him from going on with his course.

It was observed, during his next year, that Count Oguri, unlike many who had objected vigorously to hazing as freshmen, took no title to his privilege of hazing in turn those whom time had placed beneath his academic feet. In his last two years, when upper-classman rank gave him authority over under-classmen, he used the higher rank and its perquisites only to protect some unhappy freshman.

When Count Oguri, in accord with his Americanizing intention, left the collegiate hill where four highly fruitful, if unhappy, years had added their touch of development, and took his bachelor apartment on Fifth avenue, he thought with joy that his outcast state was at an end. Here he could make a new beginning. He would put aside all his American past with his enemies and acquaintances—for there was none he called friend—he would even drop the almost repellent attitude, assumed during his last college term, and again approach the world in a spirit of fellowship. no other way presented itself, his title and wealth would open a way into a society which, though perhaps bourgeois and sordid, must contain, almost against its will, the one man or woman who should be that thing he had dreamed of always, but never possessed, a friend.

With his general cleansing of old linen and putting off of old garments, he had decided to include his late associates. His entrance into the new world that streamed past his windows in carriages and automobiles, that surged by on the sidewalks, and that stretched out in fashionable brownstone as far as his roving eye could discern—his entrance into this world, which, perchance, contained for him its simple and single point of sympathy, should be due to none of those who had misunderstood him. A way would open itself, of that he was assured.

A way did open itself, but in a fashion quite foreign to the imaginings of Count Oguri. One morning, his valet laid before him a sealed envelope, with his name inscribed in feminine strokes. Oguri held it in doubting fingers.

"I feel," he told himself, "that there is something within that packet which will have its influence upon my future."

Still he toyed with it, taking delight in painting its possibilities. Then, with a sudden movement, he tore it open. Count Oguri was invited to send his cheque in payment for the inclosed tickets admitting the bearer into the inner temples of a famous hotel. The occasion was a gathering of fashionables, whose ultimate idea was exclusiveness, though there was a side suggestion of charity. Decidedly, wealth and fashion had sought out Oguri.

The count sent his cheque. There followed closely upon this event a season when his temperamental difficulties were overlooked by those who paid him attention. If he nervously chattered in his idiomatic English, he was made to feel that they thought him charming, witty. If the silence of embarrassment came to the relief of his fluttering tongue, he was graced with a high-caste reserve of manner. Oguri, before whose eyes the newly-kindled fires of sycophancy shone too brilliantly for clear sight, was momentarily dazzled and deceived.

"I am losing, at last, that pitiful uncertainty, that honorable palsy which afflicted me," he thought. "Now I am myself; I am liked for myself."

He sighed with something he took to be satisfaction.

"But have I found complete sympathy?" he inquired of himself.

He knew he had not. Yet these people seemed to like him for his personal qualities; they seemed to desire his company.

After a dance in a two-streeted, twonamed establishment, Oguri and a young fellow, whom some recent ingenuous "street" operation had embittered, found themselves in the Hyphen café for a parting stimulant.

"It's a miserable, hollow show, this seeming to enjoy yourself," sighed Oguri's vis-à-vis.

The Japanese was puzzled. "What is?" he asked.

"Oh, this social game. It's heartless and all for a profit."

The young man spoke bitterly.

In his partially awakened joy of life, the Japanese felt that he could aid the other. He said:

"No, my friend, it is not that. Take my case. Once, I was bitter against men; I wanted to be upon good terms, but they wouldn't understand me; now, I have lots of friends who want nothing."

"Don't they, though?" The other was gulping down his carbonic and whiskey. "You wait!"

"Wait?"

"Just wait a week. I've been ob-

serving your case. I see signs of its coming due in less time than that—three days."

"I do not understand you. That, perhaps—" Oguri indicated the bottle at the other's hand.

The man became nettled.

"Why, don't you know," he exclaimed, "that there are men up there"—his finger was jerked vaguely toward the ceiling in the ball-room's direction—"who want to become well acquainted, only in order to rob you through some fake companies; want to swindle you out of your money? And don't you know that there are women——?"

"No, no, no!"

"Why, there are plenty of women there that for your title and money would marry—even you!"

"Am I so repulsive then that you

say, 'even me'?"

The other looked him squarely in the eye, with the brutality of the American who has passed through several castes within a short time.

"Well, you're hardly our most esteemed type of beauty," he drawled.

The frankness of this man's bad manners destroyed for Count Oguri any value his note of warning might have had. H: was only annoyed, not angry, and still less convinced of his friends' ulterio motives.

Yet, the time came when Oguri was again forced to consider himself an outcast. It was after several men had approached him for loans or investments, and a number of women had caused the idea to penetrate his consciousness that wealth is universally appreciated by women, and that a dark husband does not lessen the value of a title, be the land of that title as far away in distance and imagination as Japan from America.

Then the old bitterness of disposition fell darkly about Oguri. For a time, his emotions were numbed through its operations. As the warmth of his own inner flame thawed him out, a light flashed across his purposes. He reasoned thus:

"All my life long I have sought

sympathy. I was ready to give it to others, but selfishly, merely that I might in turn obtain it. I have been selfish. I will devote myself to the study of my fellow-man. Then shall I find sympathy and happiness." Ah, there it is again," he paused. exclaimed. "I seek happiness selfishly, through unselfishness! No; I shall seek an interest in affairs that others may be happy, and, if by the way I myself find happiness, it shall be not my motive, but my incidental reward."

During the days of his social appearances, Oguri had come in contact with a number of persons who were unselfish, so far as the limitations of their natures permitted. They had asked him for contributions for this or that East Side work, or for a fund for the benefit of this or that depend-They had accepted his ent class. cheques with a real sense of gratitude, but still without any measure of understanding or sympathy for him. were moral examples, but their very goodness made them too narrow to entertain other than the merest surface feeling for one of alien race.

His new plan of life led Count Oguri to continue his subscriptions to their worthy activities. A young student of sociology, in need of funds to extend his course, managed to find him In this way Oguri became a benefactor. Yet he ever remained a pariah. The influences of his past life were too recent upon him, and had made him too analytical to enjoy his occupation. Still, with his old-time persistence, he swung along his course, fairly kicking himself along the path of altruism. In time, this brought him a share of newspaper attention. "The Japanese philanthropist" was a picturesque object for the imaginations of reporters.

One day, as a member of the visitors' committee, he was urged to visit the island where the waifs of a metropolis were housed. Oguri was not eager to go, but his firm conscience, molded out of the morbid materials thrown up by constant introspection, would not permit him to decline. He went.

When Count Oguri, with the large party of his associates, entered the foundling asylum, and saw on the lower floor rows of tiny tables but a few inches from the ground, with chairs about large enough for a doll, he felt a new interest. The diminutive, the natural expression of affection, appealed to him, emotional outcast as he was, in a way to defy his most searching analysis. Yes, he was glad he had sometimes made a contribution that had helped a child.

On the floor above, the entire party was admitted to a ward in which were the youngest foundlings, though none in the place was more than two years old. Nurses were few. On the floor a number of the larger infants were at feeble play. There were a few faded playthings, the common property of this

poor childhood.

The entrance of the visiting party set the ward into instant commotion. From healthy, young and weak throats, at once went up a wail. There was a pause of irresolution upon the part of the invaders. A little girl, standing still in the centre of the room, dropped her faded rag doll, and stared about her with perfect self-possession. Then, while the visitors stood motionless, she walked directly, if unsteadily, to Count Oguri. At his knees, she paused; her hand reached up to him; her lips made a sound of kissing.

"I lub you," she said.

Oguri, dumb and amazed, stared at her. The nurse hurried forward.

"She's quite a noticing child," the woman said; "she picked you out because you're so dark and foreignlooking."

"Oh," said Oguri, as he turned

coldly away.

The visiting party's stay was brief, but, during its continuance, the little girl kept her eyes riveted on Oguri. Only the nurse's attention kept her away from the Japanese.

The party left the ward through the winding corridor, Oguri in the rear.

Just before a turn hid him from the child's view, Oguri looked back.

The little girl had followed him to the door, beyond whose limits the discipline of the place had taught her not to go.

A childish foot struck the floor with

childish insistence.

"Tum back," a childish voice called, passionately, as the little girl pointed insistently to her faded rag doll.

It was an appeal straight to the heart of Oguri. It reached him. With quick strides, he went back. The child was in his arms. Within him, all the bitterness of the past melted in the tears that streamed down his face.

"I lub you," whispered a little voice.

Here, at last, was the sympathy, the love he had sought. It had come to him; it was his forever.

With the child in his arms, the Japanese turned to the laughing group that had come back to see the issue.

"What are you going to do with the child, count?" asked a woman.

"Adopt her. She is mine for this world and the next," he said, solemnly.

Three days later, the Japanese consul was called upon to arrange that Count Oguri might return to his native Nippon with his little heiress, and the matter was finally settled.

"What, before all the gods, Count Oguri, are you to do with an American child over there?" asked the mystified consul at the railroad station.

Oguri eased the little girl's position in his arms, before he answered. Then:

"To teach her two things—without which all are destitute in body, and outcasts in soul—sympathy and love."



LOVE'S SACRAMENT

THE sweet intoxicant of dew and dawn
On the young, luring mouth of Day, has gone;
Gone is the scarlet of noon's lustful fire,
Exultant in the vintage of desire.

See, now the chalice of the sun low dips, And lingers at the twilight's parted lips, Until the dripping lees of amber wine Stain richly on her breast's dim-shadowed line.

I am the twilight, love, and thou, the sun; Give me thy golden heart till day is done; Into my spirit, hollowed to thy will, Fling thou the elements thy fires distil.

EMERY POTTLE.



WE must be approaching Boston," said the guest to the automobilist. "Although I am by this time totally blind, I recognize the taste of the Boston dust."

SIC TRANSIT

I MET her not in dewy fields, 'mid grain or nodding clover; 'Twas on an elevated train that first I learned to love her. Since then I've lived, a heartless man. You wonder at my frown? Alas! her train was going up, and mine was going down!

Just my ideal—so tall and fair! for me she was intended. A thrill, a smile, our glances met, and then our courtship ended. Those eyes! Was ever sky so blue? That hair! That dimpled mouth!—But here I pause; she'd started North, and I was going South!

I've waited long; I've watched for her in country, town and street, But all in vain; I wonder now if up above we'll meet, And whether it will be the same beyond the crowded town. Ah, yes! for she'll be going up, and I'll be going down!

Lois Muirhead.



CERTAINLY IS

HOGAN—I'll tell you a good idea for a story.

Scribbler—What?

"Don't write one."



DOES Mrs. Lee powder?"
"Powder! Why, to kiss her would be like eating a marsh-mallow!"



PUZZLING

THEY call her plain; The reason why I cannot see, Because she's I!

G. E. MEREDITH.



SHE'S awfully old-fashioned! she believes in long engagements." "Worse than that! she believes in long marriages."

"ALL THAT GLITTERS"

By Katharine Pelton

I T was a stormy February afternoon, when, from an exhausting round of calls, I came home utterly worn out. I sank gratefully into the easy-chair that my little maid rolled before the fire in my boudoir. While she knelt to replace my patent-leather boots with furred slippers, she purred to me sympathetically, in her pretty, broken English.

"Madame will be soon rested! I shall prepare the hot bran-bath that madame so like; and then she will take a little glass of the so-good cordial, while I shall arrange the coiffure before monsieur will come." Celeste is one of the chief compensations of

my present life.

Was I ever so tired in the old, hardworking days before my brilliant marriage? Then it was a frolic for Betty and me to put on our white gloves, fresh from the cleaner's, and stand, clinging to a strap, in some crowded, stuffy street-car on our way to and "at from rich people's homes.'' When we got back to the little fourth-story room in the boardinghouse, we were never too tired to make a story or a play out of the absurd and pompous things we had heard and seen. Poor Betty! How she cried when she found her new and only presentable frock ruined by the bouillon some one's butler had spilled on it! It meant retirement from "society" all the rest of that Winter to poor little Betty.

"The coachman has send to madame to ask if she will excuse her horses to-night. It has snow very much, and he have fear for the lame foots of the mare. He say he shall

himself conduct the livery horses, when madame shall go to the dinner to-night."

Ah, yes; I had forgotten for a few blissful moments — Uncle Eliphalet Davis's big dinner! That was, of course, why Celeste had arranged my hair so elaborately, as I sat and dreamed and sipped my bénédictine.

The Davises give two distinct sets of dinners.

Uncle Eliphalet Davis is at the head of a great importing firm; and, at certain seasons of the year, the Continental houses that he represents send over their junior partners and younger sons, on the pretext of getting in touch with American business methods.

A more shocking set of young reprobates it might be hard to find; certainly, they are the only clever men ever to be met beneath the deadly respectable roof-tree of the Davises. Doubtless, these exemplary youths demand much entertainment of a more congenial variety; but, at least once during their stay, Uncle Eliphalet considers it proper to ask them to dine at his own sacred board. To meet them are invited a few artistic and literary paupers, whose knowledge of the foreign tongue serves to make these occasions bearable to the visitors; although the same persons' poverty, and superiority of wit and manner, rigorously exclude them from Mrs. Eliphalet Davis's "set."

When Uncle Eliphalet found that I spoke French with some skill and great fearlessness, I was ordered, like the entrées and flowers, for the annual banquet to these foreigners. Later,

Betty was also bidden; for she was a beauty—and, besides, when we came together it spared Uncle 'Liph the expense of sending us home in a cab, for under mutual escort we could vanish beyond his hospitable portal into the convenient and economical street-car.

I confess that, for days after we received our invitation, Betty and I used to speculate greedily on the probable menu of that dinner. When we sat down to our luncheons of smoked beef, creamed codfish, ginger wafers and stewed prunes: "Birds!" I would whisper cheeringly to my Betty, as she vainly tried to partake of the boarding-house fare. "Birds, broiled mushrooms, dry champagne, maybe—strawberries, my child. Courage! It's only three days to wait!"

Betty, lifting a stone-china tea-cup with the delicate fingers that, even then, seemed so frail and transparent, would respond, gaily: "And don't forget the Bohemian glass and the Coalport plates, and the real live roses and orchids in the centre!"

My dainty, fairy princess, whose very being hungered and thirsted for beauty! My little Betty—would that I might share with you to-day the pleasant things my money buys! But whom the gods love, they take away; and they wanted you, my little sister—even, perhaps, as I want you now.

Uncle Eliphalet Davis also gives another set of dinners, more costly even, to a number of elect beings registered in the inner and exclusive pages of Mrs. Davis's visiting-book.

From the doubtful joys of the bohemian banquets, before mentioned; my marriage to Danforth Carleton forever removed me, promoting me to the circle of railroad magnates and multi-millionaires enthroned as leaders in what the Sunday newspapers term, "the social world." Until my first dinner of this class, I had never dreamed how detestably one can be bored, and I await its semi-annual occurrence with real dread.

At these awful functions, we sit for two hours or more, trifling with costly and unseasonable viands, for which not one of us has any appetite; and every one is very polite and very dull. We laugh, occasionally, little mirthless shrieks—at some obviously "funny story," or we giggle, in a refined and cultivated manner, at the elephantine persiflage between husbands and wives that is a regular feature of the programme. My husband, being born and bred to high life, has been schooled to endure these select functions with patience, but I shall always at heart be an alien to them.

Some rebellious thoughts were lingering in my mind, when Dan appeared in a long brocade dressinggown, the top of his head still sleek and moist from his tub, for his customary lounge by my boudoir fire, before we were obliged to dress for our departure.

My husband waited, punctiliously, until Celeste had withdrawn, before he kissed me; then he flung himself on the low couch, and took out his cigarette-case.

"If you will allow me," he said, with the grand air that is perfectly natural to him, though, when I first met him, it struck me as stagey.

"If you would only allow me!" I thought, silently, but hopelessly. I have given up smoking since my marriage. Dan's horror at the idea of any of his women-folk indulging in the weed is pathetic.

"Half an hour of comfort before me!" sighed Dan, luxuriously. His evening clothes, I knew, he had arranged methodically in his dressingroom, ready to don in a very few minutes' time. Some wives, they say, make this a sort of religious rite to be performed by no hand but their own. I tried arranging his evening things for Dan once, taking good care to leave traces of my struggles around the studs and cuff-links, and beamed with artless, wifely pride as I exhibited my work. The result was successful beyond my wildest hopes. Obviously fearful of hurting my feelings by seeming ingratitude, Dan offered

to subscribe fifty dollars to my pet charity, then gently begged me never to take such trouble again, under any circumstances.

As I crossed the room to get my manicure powder, Dan held out his hand to me with that mute, boyish adoration in his eyes that has often come near to winning my love, which, together with the recollection of the struggle I escaped by marrying a year ago, renders my life bearable. So, I pulled a cushion to the floor by the lounge, and seated myself where Dan could play with the little curls on my neck. I think it wise to encourage a man in these moods.

He became much interested in my manipulation of the ivory and gold polisher. Dan's hands are his only beauty, and he knows it; or, rather, he knows they are very handsome. would be too much to expect a man to realize that he has but one perfect feature; though, all things considered, Dan is far from vain, as men go.

A man of my husband's wealth and position, though his natural endowments may be few, may, at least, be termed "distinguished" by the people who fawn upon him; but I, being Danforth Carleton's wife, see clearly that he is a somewhat commonplace individual. But I can admire his strong. white hands, beside which my little one seemed so babyish and weak, as I laid it in his palm.

"What a useless article it looks!" I said, laughing up into his eyes. never have ceased coquetting with my husband—a point I wonder women do not more generally score. It is so easy; and, when it goes so far to preserve a man's interest in other women generally, why not sustain a flirtation at home? And then, besides, it keeps one in practice.

"It's a very powerful one," responded Dan, fatuously, with a little stage by-play. "Do you know, little girl, every one tells me you have grown handsomer of late? Of course, I can't see how that is possible!"

"Wealth and position agree with me, Dan. I was getting to be an old

spinster, wrinkled and cross and worried, when I met you, hapless victim! My naturally angelic disposition was turning bitter and suspicious in the fight for daily bread. I like buttered muffins better, and they agree with You are a very good old boy, Croesus." I made a fretful, anxious "Before marriage," I explained, face. fancifully. Then I assumed my most honeyed smile and gracious manner. "Charmed to see you, Mrs. Grundy!" "That's the effect of muffins and millinery and a place in the Blue Book!"

My husband shouted with amusement, as, fortunately, he considers me a very witty person. "You'd have made a hit on the stage!" he gasped.

Just then a hurdy-gurdy, somewhere down in the street, began to whine out the old "Cavalleria" intermezzo. How I loathe that tune! I never hear it but poor Bob Thorne's face, with its wistful eyes and set, white mouth, as I saw it last, flashes before me. Ah, but I couldn't help it, dear! People aren't happy in real life, at least that way, Bob. Love in a cottage will not last, and, even if love in a palace doesn't pay—well, give me the palace.

"Why so suddenly grave, dearie?" asked my husband, with the caress of

an affectionate St. Bernard.

"Because we must end this model domestic scene of fireside felicity, and go to that brute of a dinner," I fibbed, bravely.

It took all the accessories of a new Paris frock to drive away the memory of Bob's face.

My husband came back, very stiff and crackly, while Celeste was fastening my carriage boots.

'That's right. You forgot them last time, careless child!" said he, paternally. "And take a boa, or lace thing, in case the drawing-room is chilly after that grilling dining-room of the Davises'."

"Oh, Dan, how crooked your shoulders look in that coat!" I cried. thoughtlessly — Bob was a West Pointer. "I don't think Benson's made a success of that coat, Dan."

"Now, I thought it particularly good," said Dan, somewhat touchily, as he glanced over the offending shoulder into the hall mirror. Neither of us spoke again until the coupé had rolled along for a block or two.

"Are you cross, Bear?" I said, peeping up at him as we passed an electric light. "Because, if you're in a savage humor, I won't suggest that a man's first duty is to button his wife's

gloves."

"A thousand pardons, Fi!" said Dan, penitently. One should, when possible, make a man feel self-reproachful at such moments. He began tugging so willingly at my glove that all the buttons came off, at which he swore under his breath; and I burst into a delighted peal of laughter. I love to hear my good husband swear; it makes me feel so much less wicked myself.

"It's no end sweet of you to take it that way. I didn't mean to be so rough," said Dan; and I thought it unnecessary to mention how loose the buttons of new gloves always are, or that I intended to roll them back under the wrists at dinner, anyway.

Of course, I get on rather well with Dan; but he is a bore at dinner, or, rather, I fancy he must be. I never have to endure his elegance at such functions, of course; though some stupid or malicious hostesses will place husbands and wives on opposite sides of the table, which makes it awkward for the man who takes you in, and possibly for you—a little later. But, I'm told, Dan is a favorite. Being a well-known financier, the women, no doubt, think it an honor to be taken in by him, and the men are probably looking for tips.

If there is any plot in this rambling tale of mine, it thickens rapidly at

this point.

When Dan and I sailed into the Davises' drawing-room, I in the tink-ling splendor of my green-and-silver-wrought dinner-frock, the first person my eyes rested on, and, I need hardly add, the only one I thenceforth really heeded, was Reggie Ferrers. Reggie

Ferrers, the satirist, with his clever, near-sighted eyes and sensitive mouth and chin, a poor, talented author, of all men to be found at Uncle Eliphalet's dinner that night!

dinner that night!

"No doubt I'm a substitute. We landed only this morning," said Reggie, wickedly, under his breath, after we had exchanged conversational greetings. "I never aspired so high before."

"Did I look surprised?" said I, wondering if my voice was as shaky as my knees. Reggie had gone abroad before my wedding. "I thought you still in England, you know. Translate it into, 'pleased to see you again,' and, 'I congratulate you on the success of your book'-to claim a woman's privilege-'I told you so,'" I ended, trying to appear very matronly and patronizing. How handsome Reggie looked! His eyes sparkled, wickedly; then the old expression of reckless deviltry settled around his mouth, warning me to save myself at once. But I was too gaily excited by seeing him again to heed the timorous appeal of my brow-beaten conscience,

"I'm to take you in," exclaimed Reggie, after consulting his card. "You, the wife of the railroad magnate! Good Lord, Fichen—I mean Mrs. Carleton—the world's a jest, and all things show it. You taught me that philosophy, Phyllis. You always had a charming sense of humor—that

excellent thing in a woman."

"Don't be a cynical goose, Reggie," I chided him, with an assumption of greater ease than I felt. Clearly, this was not to be a dinner that bored one. I marshaled my nerves into line, and bade them be calm and obedient. I prayed for mastery over Reggie Ferrers. I knew there would be a desperate battle between us. Did Reggie blame me still? Did he still hate me? Would he be generous, should he win the victory over me, a weak, unhappy girl?

How I detested him for being so handsome and clever! How I longed, at the next moment, to sob out all my misery to him, and beg for a little of our old gay nappiness and sympathy together! Ah, there was madness in my brain as well as in his, and I, too, possessed that dare-devil recklessness that would play with edged tools at such a time.

When I took Reggie's arm to go in to dinner, my hand touched his, quite by chance. I felt his tremble, and, at that, the little imp within me rejoiced, evilly; all my discretion flew to the winds. Dan was ahead of us, safe with some unknown woman who wore English stays. I cast down the gauntlet with a blush and a sigh, and then I glanced up into Reggie's intense, excited face. The battle had begun.

At first, my companion was moody, then he suddenly flashed out into his old, brilliant, fascinating self. Reggie could hold a roomful of people transfixed with his talk, and he had the supreme talent of making a woman feel herself a perfect de Staël. We had always entertained each other exceedingly in the old days. And then he grew tender, and my heart began to feel big with a terrible ache; even while I rallied him on his sentimental mood.

"Have you forgotten that afternoon in the Stormy Petrel?" whispered Reggie, hoarsely.

"But there were so many," I returned, gaily, trying to gain time.

"The afternoon," said Reggie, bending over me and looking deep into my eyes.

"Really, you must be good, Reggie," I said, hastily, glancing up and across the table with some apprehension.

For the first time, I perceived a long mirror on the opposite wall, and, with some confusion, met my husband's eyes in the glass. As I called a smile into my face, Dan coolly and deliberately turned away from me to answer some question from his fair companion, she of the angles and Gothic construction.

"Who is the early English spinster with my husband?" said I, affecting deep interest, and determined to lead the conversation into safer channels.

"Heiress from the 'Land o' Cakes,' I believe," said Reggie, indifferently. "Don't ask her figure. I'm sure you don't want to know it, if it's like the one only too visible—Peter Robinson's best, warranted real bone!"

"Don't be ill-natured," I said, hys-

terically.

"I'll wager they're discussing Art, with a capital," Reggie continued, unabashed.

"If you knew Mr. Carleton, you'd never accuse him of such frivolity," said I.

I have taken some trouble to lead up to and repeat this remark, because I can truthfully say that it was my nearest approach to disparagement of my husband. Reggie angled skilfully; but, I am thankful to remember, quite unsuccessfully, for some hint or confession of discontent on my part. I was furious with Dan for treating me like a naughty child, and I took no pains to conceal my flirtation with Reggie; indeed, when I felt Dan was looking my way, I redoubled its appearance of intensity; but, as a matter of fact, I was loyal to my husband in every tone and word.

After we women arrived safely in the drawing-room, my tense nerve somewhat relaxed, and I realized that my heart was throbbing with unrest and unhappiness. How was I to support existence, with Reggie Ferrers in the same town? And Dan was angry, too! I was more afraid than I cared to own, even to myself, of the quiet, dignified man I had never learned to know, much less to love. Oh, that I could sob out my miserable confession to Betty! What would Betty have said? Would she—could she—did she know? But Betty would not smile at me to-She would pity me, but she night. would reproach me; and yet she could understand me. would not be too hard—if—if-

Another voice at my ear startled me. I turned, and beheld Reggie, the Gothic lady and my husband. "Mrs. Carleton," said Reggie, with much manner, "as one of my oldest friends, I want to present to you—my wife," and the Gothic lady inclined her stately head. I shall, perhaps, some day, forgive Reggie Ferrers, but never should I have been able to forgive myself had not my woman's pride come so gallantly to the rescue.

As Reggie stood watching me narrowly, with half-closed eyes and twitching lips, I put out both hands and grasped the bony knuckles of the bride, with what a reporter would have termed, "graceful cordiality."

"I am delighted to meet Mrs. Ferrers!" I cried. "It's so nice for Reggie to have some one, at last, to keep him straight. I'm sure he is to be

congratulated!"

"We landed only a few hours ago," explained Mrs. Reggie, in a cathedral manner. "Reginald was called suddenly to America by his publishers; and, at the last moment, we announced our engagement and were married quietly, at my home in Perth. I call it quite shockin', myself!"

"Romantic, not shocking," I said, sweetly. "But Reggie always had an eye to dramatic effects. He

ought to write a play."

"Perhaps. If Mrs. Carleton would take a part in it, I might feel there would be a chance for success," said Reggie. "Mrs. Carleton is a capital actress, Gwendoline."

"Remember, I only take part in farces, nothing serious," I flashed back. "Mrs. Ferrers, you will let me have the honor of giving you a

luncheon very soon?"

I had been acting for Reggie's benefit and had quite forgotten my husband, who now, to my great relief, joined casually in the talk. After a few minutes, his deep voice, seemingly addressed to no one in particular, fell like balm on my soul.

"Phyllis, I have made our excuses to our hostess for leaving early. The carriage has been waiting for some time, and you know how tyrannical

Johnson is."

Ah, how glad I was to escape! But

only as I fastened my cloak in front of Mrs. Davis's mirror did I realize how pale and weary I looked. The thought crossed my mind that Dan had seen, and was taking me away before any one else should notice it. But knowing how obtuse men are in such matters, I dismissed that idea.

Dan silently helped me into the carriage, followed me, banged the door, and then retired into a corner, behind

his big fur collar.

"Did you have a pleasant time?" I inquired, airily. Had I not broken the silence by speech, I should cer-

tainly have screamed.

"Not very," replied Dan, tersely, pulling his hat over his eyes. Then I shivered, and Dan said, politely, "You are cold, I'm afraid. Let me tuck the rug around your feet."

"N-n-o—I'm quite c-c-comfortable. D-d-d-don't bother," I chattered, with a sudden burst of tears. Dan's answer was to seize me as if I were a baby, and to tuck me up energetically in the fur carriage-robe, to the detriment of my chiffons; but he did not offer any sympathy or consolation. And I only shivered and cried harder, until the humor of Reggie's trick suddenly overpowered me, and I began to laugh hysterically.

"D-d-don't be so c-cross, Dan!" I gasped. "Be good to me, please!"

Then Dan put one arm about me, and held me close, while I laughed and sobbed on his shoulder, glad of his protection, yet mightily afraid of him.

"Aren't you g-g-glad it's fur and the starch won't come out?" I giggled, damply, wishing I could fling myself out under the wheels and end the "jest," as Reggie Ferrers called this useless existence of mine.

"Poor little girl, you're all worn out!" said Dan, seriously, but kindly, to my intense relief. I gave way then to my unhappiness, but my husband did not attempt to soothe or reason with me.

When we reached our house, Dan would have tried to carry me in, but

I brushed quickly by him, and raced up to my room to lower the gas; for I knew what a fright I must look. I had but just accomplished this when Dan overtook me, and, looking rather relieved to find I was not attempting suicide, he established me in the easy-chair and, somewhat sharply, forbade me to leave it.

"I don't care to call Celeste just now, Phyllis," he said, gravely. "Please try to do without her, and let me help you out of this tight

finery."

My elegant husband was kneeling, rather white and anxious, at my feet, to unbuckle my high-heeled satin slippers; his tie was under one ear; his hat, which he had entirely forgotten, balanced precariously on the back of his bent head. I wanted awfully to kick it off on my little silk-stockinged toe, it was so temptingly close; but, under the circumstances, I feared Dan might not think it a wifely act.

Reggie Ferrers's laugh rang in my ears. I hated him! I hated Dan! Most of all, I hated my vain, selfish, wretched self! I knew Dan was trying not to let me see his displeasure, but I felt that he was deeply offended with me for flirting so wildly with Ferrers.

A sense of my husband's goodness, and of his strong, loving protection, and of all that it meant, came over I felt he would never forgive me; in his straightforward honesty, how could he understand me? What should an untempted, untemptable fellow like Dan know of a coquette's frenzied and morbid thirst for excitement, or of her hunger for conquest? In spirit, if not in letter, he might judge me guilty, and refuse to consider my weakness and frivolity in the light of an excuse. He might insist on a practical separation, send me abroad, perhaps; leave me alone at this crisis, a prey to my own remorse and unhappiness-what would then become of me?

I gave a little groan; and then there came to me an impulse—I felt Betty

might approve, if she knew. My heart grew less heavy at the idea, even while I feared. I sat up and put my hand on Dan's shoulder.

"Thank you very much, you kind old boy. I'll try to be sensible and calm now; in fact, my stately and imposing self!" I said. Then, not daring to reflect, I suddenly threw both arms round my husband's neck and sobbed out the whole miserable story.

"Save me, Dan!" I ended, piteously. "Save me from Reggie, and from myself—and don't be very

hard!"

Dan did not answer for a moment; then, to my infinite comfort, he just held me closer, and whispered, "I knew it all before you told me, Phyllis. Thank God, you trusted your dull old husband!"

"You-knew-it-all?" I gasped.

Dan nodded. "You have never thought much of my perception, Fi; but love is a great teacher, and I understand you better than you dream. I know you have never cared for me."

"Oh, Dan, I'm not worthy of you!" I stammered. "But I tried to love you! I thought you knew I did."

"Even a stupid old duffer like me knows when the woman he cares for doesn't care for him!" said my husband, simply. Whereat I only cried the harder.

"Don't cry so, little one. It is my fault, Phyl. You weren't meant for a life of poverty and care, and I thought only of saving you from it, when I persuaded you to marry me. I loved you so, dear, that I never dreamed you might not learn to care for me. But we've been good friends always, Fi, and I honor you for all you've done to make things jolly, dear."

As he spoke, a great wave of joy swept all the bitterness from my heart. I lifted my eyes slowly to Dan's, and, as I looked, a sudden happy light dawned and grew in his.

"And doesn't a duffer know when she finds she does care?" I whis-

pered.

WHEN YOU COME BACK

WHEN you come back to me, you will not know What weary winds of wonder, storms of fear, Have swept my lonely soul since you were here, Or how, the moment that you rise to go, Doubt glowers in the east, the gray clouds grow To cover all my blue; the landscape sere Huddles unsheltered, and the sudden drear, Dull glare of tempest in the west flames low.

You will not know! There is no way to tell
Of that next day washed clear by gusts of rain,
My flowers lifting shy, sweet heads again,
My robin singing, softly, "All is well!"
No, when you come again, here is my smile,
My hand—as if I trusted all the while.

NORA BARNHART.



A SERIOUS OBJECTION

SHE—What do you think of smokeless powder? HE—It is difficult to remove from a vest.



MORE TO FOLLOW

SYLVESTER—She is a woman with a past, I understand. RANDOLPH—Yes, and more coming.



PETITION

OH, hold me closer to your heart,
Lest Fate should come between!
Or Time, his cruel arrows dart;
Oh, hold me closer to your heart!
Some breeze might blow Love's wings apart
Where now they do o'erlean.
Oh, hold me closer to your heart
Lest Fate should come between!

CONSTANCE FARMAR.

THE MODERN AUTOCRAT

A COMEDY OF CROSS-PURPOSES

By Louise Collins

SCENE—The Courtenays' breakfast-room. Mr. Courtenay is deeply interested in the morning paper. Mrs. Courtenay is engaged in opening her letters.

MRS. COURTENAY—Gordon, do you think that I can have a new gown for Mrs. Ralston's dinner-dance?

MR. COURTENAY (abstractedly)—Yes, yes; of course. (Proudly) I knew that speech of mine would tell. That fixes me all right with the party.

Silence for a few moments. A smile spreads over MR. COURTENAY's face as

he continues reading. Mrs. Courtenay opens another letter.

MRS. COURTENAY—Laura wishes me to go south with her, Gordon. She leaves at the end of next week. What do you think of the suggestion?

MR. COURTENAY (without looking up)—Capital! capital! That is what I

call a really brilliant idea.

MRS. COURTENAY (delightedly)—What a dear you are! I was almost afraid to ask; you made so many objections the last time I spoke to you.

Another period of silence, during which Mr. Courtenay turns a page, and

MRS. COURTENAY opens a third letter.

MRS. COURTENAY—Madeleine has discovered a treasure of a milliner. She is really a lady, but circumstances have forced her into business. It would be charitable to order a hat or two from her. What do you think, Gordon?

MR. COURTENAY (hearing only her question)—Think? Why, I think that it is just the thing. Admirable. Didn't I tell you, my dear, that I was on the

high road to success?

Silence for fully five minutes. MR. COURTENAY finishes reading his speech

and turns to the editorial page. His pleased expression gives way to a frown.

MRS. COURTENAY—I forgot to tell you that Katherine Webster was here yesterday. Her affairs are in a dreadful muddle since poor Lester's death. She wishes you to call some afternoon and give her a little advice.

MR. COURTENAY (savagely)—Confound it!

MRS. COURTENAY (amazed)—Why Gordon, you are positively inhuman! She is the widow of your oldest friend.

MR. COURTENAY—The brute!

MRS. COURTENAY—How can you speak that way of Lester, when he was your——?

MR. COURTENAY (still buried in his paper)—I repeat, he's a brute! Any man who will distort my meaning in such a way as to jeopardize my prospects with my party is a—

MRS. COURTENAY—You are losing your senses, Gordon! Why, Lester

never---

MR. COURTENAY—Who said "Lester"? I am talking of the editor of this paper. He is a scoundrel, and I mean to call on him and tell him so.



MRS. COURTENAY—What a horrid man he must be! But, Gordon, if I order that gown this morning, it may——

MR. COURTENAY—Gown? What gown?

MRS. COURTENAY (surprised)—Why, you just told me that I could have a

new gown for the Ralstons' dinner, and that I might go south with-

MR. COURTENAY—Never said anything of the kind! You must be dreaming, for I have been reading this vile paper for the last twenty minutes. Gown, indeed! I guess not! Go away? Not if I know it!

MRS. COURTENAY (in a torrent of tears)—You are positively the most selfish man I ever knew, and I (sob)—I am glad (sob)—that editor treated your

sp-sp-speech as he did!



THE INQUISITION

THAT medieval days are gone,
The question we may moot;
Men still go broke upon the wheel,
And suitors get the boot.

And even football plainly shows
There's nothing that we lack;
The teams are on the gridiron now,
Their friends are on the rack.

McLandburgh Wilson



NO APPEAL

MEEKER—My wife and I always settle our differences by arbitration.

BRADLEY—Who is the arbitrator?

"My wife, of course."



FOND OF DISCUSSION

TOMPKINS—Now, we'll admit, just for the sake of argument, that——His Wife—Oh, you'd do anything for the sake of an argument.



NLY religious compositions should be played on an upright piano.

SHEEP'S CLOTHING

By Harold Melbourne

ONCE there was a bad man who was good-looking. Bad men are not always good-looking; but good-looking men are often bad. Perhaps they are bad because they are good-looking. At any rate, that is why our bad man was bad. He was always falling in with women and falling out with men. Men and women would not let him be good. They would only let him be good-looking. He was big and strong, and his legs were straight and his shoulders were broad. His face was the face of a Greek god. His complexion was a rich, clear olive; his eyes brown and bright; his hair short and black; his mouth full-lipped, yet firm.

There was a good-looking girl who lived opposite the good-looking man. The girl was small and dainty and flower-like. Her face was pink-and-white and lovely; her eyes big and blue; her hair light and soft and wavy; her mouth small and red. And the good-looking girl was good. The good-looking man soon found that out. He smirked at the good-looking girl. But she only smiled back, sadly.

And the man became intensely interested in the good-looking girl, and,

finally, he spoke to her.

"Let me talk to you," he whispered; "I know everything."

"Then I cannot let you talk to me," answered the girl, quietly, "for I know nothing." She paused, and then went on: "But I suspect a lot. I suspect that men are either wolves or sheep; and I suspect that they are mostly wolves; I like sheep."

And the girl walked away. But the man stood still. He was dumfounded. The girl had not fallen in love with him! Instead, he had fallen in love with her!

"And she doesn't like wolves!" he mused; "and she does like sheep!"

Then he went and donned sheep's clothing.

The good-looking man ceased to smirk at the good-looking girl. But he smiled at her, sadly, even as she had smiled at him. And he loved her with all his heart and soul. Finally, he spoke to her again.

"I respect and revere you," he whispered.

"And I respect you," said the girl.

After that, the good-looking man and the good-looking girl were often together. The man was always courteous and devoted, and the girl was always

gentle and kind. They loved each other, dearly.

One day a good-looking woman, who was bad, came to see the good-looking girl, who was good. And the good-looking woman, who was bad, said to the good-looking girl, who was good, "The good-looking man who comes to see you is not good; he is bad. I, too, am bad. But I will not let him be bad with you."

"Oh!" moaned the good girl, "is he then a wolf?"
"Yes," snickered the bad woman, "he is a wolf!"
"A wolf in sheep's clothing!" sobbed the good girl.

"Yes, a wolf in sheep's clothing!" sneered the bad woman.

Before the bad woman left, the good-looking man came. The good-looking man gasped. The bad woman laughed. But the good girl cried.

"So you wear sheep's clothing, eh?" jeered the bad woman. "Do you?" wailed the good girl. "Is it true?"

"Yes; it is true," answered the good-looking man; "and I always shall wear it!"

"No, you shall not!" snarled the bad woman. "You shall not wear sheep's clothing. You are a wolf!" And she sprang at him and tore off his sheep's clothing.

But lo! no wolf was revealed—only a sheep!

SHEPHERDESS FAIR

SHEPHERDESS fair, the flocks you keep Are dreams and desires and tears and sleep.

O shepherdess brown, O shepherdess fair, Where are my flocks you have in care?

My wonderful, white, wide-pasturing sheep Of dream and desire and tears and sleep?

Many the flocks, but small the care You give to their keeping, O shepherdess fair!

O shepherdess gay, your flocks have fed By the iris pool, by the saffron bed,

Till now, by noon, they have wandered far, And you have forgotten where they are!

O shepherdess fair, O shepherdess wild, Full wise are your flocks, but you a child!

You shall not be chid if you let them stray. In your own wild way, in your own child way, You will call them all back at the close of day.

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

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SO MUCH MORE INTERESTING

CMALL DAUGHTER (tired of playing alone)—Mummy, when I get to heaven shall I always play wif angels?

Mother-Yes, my darling.

"Mummy, don't you fink that if I've been vewy, vewy dood all the mornin' playin' wif' angels, in the afternoon p'waps God will give me a lickle devil to play wif?"

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